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[nottingham.ac.uk/healthyu](https://nottingham.ac.uk/healthyu)



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## Alcohol and drugs Information and advice to help you stay safe



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# Alcohol

## Know your limits

To reduce the risk of harming your health, people are advised not to regularly drink more than 14 units a week. Spread your drinking over three days or more if you drink as much as 14 units a week.

	Description	Units
	A pint of beer, lager or cider (ABV 3.6%)	2
	A pint of beer, lager or cider (ABV 5.2%)	3
	250ml glass of wine (ABV 12%)	3
	440ml can of premium lager (ABV 5%)	2
	A pint of super strength lager or beer (ABV 9%)	2
	275ml alcopop or bottle of regular lager (ABV 5.4%)	1.5
	Bottle of wine (ABC 12%)	9
	25ml spirit (ABV 40%)	1

## The effects

Alcohol can affect your mood, it's a depressant. So if you are feeling low when you start drinking you may feel worse after a few drinks. It takes your body about an hour to process one unit of alcohol, so pace yourself or your body won't be able to cope.

Vomiting, loss of balance, poor sleep and slurring of speech are just a few of the short term side effects. Long term use can lead to stomach cancer, heart problems, obesity and liver problems.

## Binge drinking

Binge drinking, pre-lashing, pre-drinking and pre-loading are terms used to describe drinking a lot of alcohol in a short space of time. Many studies suggest that people who pre-drink are around 75% more likely to continue to drink heavily on a night out. Drinking large amounts of alcohol in a short space of time can lead to an increase in accidents, anti-social, aggressive and violent behaviour.

Unwanted side effects may include:

- Feeling embarrassed
- A bad hangover, missing lectures or handing work in late
- Throwing up and not looking or feeling your best
- Spending too much money on alcohol
- Having an accident and injuring yourself or somebody else
- Waking up the morning after and not remembering what happened the night before
- Being a victim of crime or getting involved in a fight
- Getting into a vulnerable or risky situation
- Having unprotected sex and risking contracting a sexually transmitted infection or unplanned pregnancy

## What can you do

- Limit how much you drink on any single occasion
- Drink more slowly – try having your first drink of the night in the bar or club
- Drink with food
- Alternate with water or non-alcoholic drinks

## Useful tips to help you stay safe and enjoy your night out

### Eating isn't cheating – drinking on an empty stomach

**Reduce the risk:** if your plan is to have a good time make sure you eat something before you go out. You won't get drunk as quickly which means the evening will last longer and you are less likely to throw up.

### Haven't drunk alcohol before or have drunk very little?

Be careful. Your tolerance won't be great, and you may find you get drunk quickly.

**Reduce the risk:** eat before you drink. Don't be pressured into drinking more than you want to,

and start slowly. You can always have a soft drink or drink lower strength beer/lager or wine. But if you don't feel like drinking, don't – chances are you won't be on your own.

### Alcohol and weight gain

Alcohol often contains lots of calories. If you regularly drink more than the recommended amounts you are likely to gain weight.



### Alcohol and money

Spend too much on alcohol and you won't have much money left for other activities.

**Reduce the risk:** planning in advance always helps. Steer clear of rounds and large groups as they can work out more expensive. Only take out a set amount of money to spend on alcohol and keep your drinking money separate from any cash needed to get home at the end of the night.

### Risk-taking, staying safe and getting home

Alcohol can affect your ability to make decisions and increases the chance of engaging in risky behaviour. This may put you at greater risk of injuring yourself, having unprotected sex or becoming involved in a criminal offence.

**Reduce the risk:** either designate a driver or store the numbers of licensed taxis in your phone before you go out. The Students' Union have partnered with DG Taxis to set a fixed price list. Get yourself on the fixed price list by texting **TAXI** to **80818**.

If you don't have enough money to get home, you can ring DG and

ask to use the UoN Emergency Taxi Scheme. You'll be asked to give your name and student number, and you must show your student ID card. You'll need to head into the SU reception the next working day to pay your fare.

Look out for your friends and make sure they do the same for you; if anyone gets into difficulties don't hesitate to call **999**. If you are on campus, call campus security first on **0115 951 8888**.

### Alcohol and violence

Drinking may put you at greater risk of losing your temper, causing you to overreact in certain situations which can lead to aggressive behaviour. Being drunk can also make you a victim of crime as you are more likely to be seen as an easy target for robbery and assault.

**Reduce the risk:** drink sensibly. Try to be aware of your surroundings and keep your possessions hidden.

### Drinking and social media do not mix

Posting images you later regret.

**Reduce the risk:** don't get caught out – stay in control.

## Alcohol



### Feeling tired and not looking or feeling your best

Alcohol might help you nod off, but even just a few drinks can affect the quality of your sleep. A heavy night of drinking can leave you waking up feeling like you haven't had any rest at all.

### Drink spiking

The addition of extra alcohol or drugs to drinks could result in you ending up in a risky and unsafe situation.

**Reduce the risk:** don't accept drinks from strangers and don't leave your drink unattended. Never sip from a drink that has been left unattended and if it looks or tastes suspect, don't drink it.

### Mixing alcohol and other drugs

Mixing alcohol with other drugs can be very unpredictable and dangerous. Certain medications, such as antidepressants, should not be mixed with alcohol.

### Alcohol and your studies

The University does not encourage excessive drinking and is committed to promoting the health and wellbeing of students and reducing the associated risks.

The University encourages students to seek appropriate advice and support. However, incidents of drink-related anti-social behaviour are taken very seriously under the University's code of discipline.

[nottingham.ac.uk/  
governance/documents/  
code-of-discipline.pdf](https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/governance/documents/code-of-discipline.pdf)

## Drugs

# Drugs

Drug misuse can refer to the use of an illegal substance or the abuse of a prescribed or over-the-counter drug. Drugs can have an impact on your mental and physical health, as well as having an unwanted influence on your behaviour.

Many students will choose to avoid trying or using any type of drug, while others may want to try them. Whatever your attitude towards drugs, it's important that you are aware of the facts so that you can assess the risks, make informed choices and stay safe.

## Tips for staying safe

The best way to stay safe is to avoid drugs completely. Know the facts, know yourself and resist pressure.

### Things to consider:

- Everyone's tolerance is different
- You can never really be sure of the strength, content or purity of any illegal drug
- Don't rush into taking another dose because you think the one you took earlier isn't working.
- If you're dancing and under the influence, take regular breaks to chill out and sip non-alcoholic drinks
- Mixing more than one substance (including alcohol) can be unpredictable and dangerous
- Don't assume everyone is capable of making it home – make sure you know how everyone is getting back
- If you take drugs, tell friends what you have taken in case of any difficulties
- Look out for your friends and make sure they look out for you. If anyone gets into difficulty, make sure you know what to do – see 'what to do in an emergency'

## Drug classification and the law

The Misuse of Drugs Act divides drugs into three classes: A, B and C. Class A drugs attract the most severe penalties as they are considered to cause the most serious harm. The law covers a range of offences, including intent to supply, unlawful supply, import or export and unlawful production.

**It's worth remembering that the legal status of drugs is complex but if prosecuted for drugs possession or supply you could face:**

- Suspension or exclusion from university
- Eviction from your accommodation - a drug conviction, or even a caution, can jeopardise your academic and professional career

- Effects on your future career, particularly in medicine, nursing and law
- Limits on the countries you can travel to
- For up to date information on classification and the law go to [talktofrank.com](http://talktofrank.com)



## The University's position on drugs

The University has a very clear policy in relation to drugs, which is strictly adhered to in order to support and protect our community.

Please refer to the University code of discipline for information: [nottingham.ac.uk/governance/documents/code-of-discipline.pdf](http://nottingham.ac.uk/governance/documents/code-of-discipline.pdf)

Students involved in illegal drug activity will be liable for disciplinary action under criminal law and the University's code of discipline. Disciplinary action may include eviction from student accommodation, fines, suspension from studies and expulsion from the University.

**The Psychoactive Substances Act 2016** makes it illegal to supply any 'legal highs' for human consumption. It's an offence to sell or even give psychoactive substances to anyone for free, even to friends.

Psychoactive substances are designed to mimic class A, B or C drugs such as cocaine or cannabis but they may not have the same effects as the drug they are supposed to replicate.

New drugs are constantly being developed and long term effects on the body and brain are unknown.

**Student health and safety are of primary concern and we urge students to seek appropriate confidential help and support.**

## Smart drugs

Relate to a group of prescription drugs used to improve concentration, memory and mental stamina during periods of study. The most commonly used drugs are Modafinil, Ritalin and Adderall.

These are prescription only medicines used for mental health conditions such as Narcolepsy and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

Side effects can include insomnia, headaches, skin rashes, palpitations and nervousness. There is also concern that they may exacerbate any underlying mental health problems.

Modafinil is a prescription-only medication but not a controlled substance, so it is not illegal to be caught in possession of it. However, under the Medicines Act, it is an offence to supply

which includes everything from wholesale dealing to simply giving some to a friend.

Methylphenidate (Ritalin) and Adderall are class B drugs. This means you can't sell or possess them without a prescription.

For a comprehensive and up-to-date guide to drugs, including how they might affect you and the risks and the law, please refer to the Frank website: [talktofrank.com](http://talktofrank.com)

## What to do in an emergency

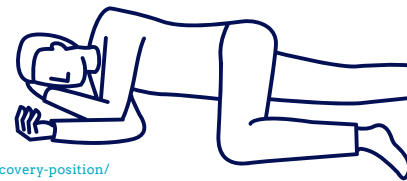
**On campus:** call Security on **0115 951 8888**.

**Off campus:** If your need is urgent but not a medical emergency call **111**. Call **999** if the person is seriously ill or injured and their life is at risk.

If you are helping someone who is in difficulty, put them in the recovery position (below) and call an ambulance. Inform medical staff what drugs have been taken and give them a sample if possible.

### The recovery position

1. With the person lying on their back, kneel on the floor at their side
2. Place the arm nearest you at a right angle to their body with their hand upwards, towards the head
3. Tuck their other hand under the side of their head, so that the back of their hand is touching their cheek
4. Bend the knee farthest from you to a right angle
5. Carefully roll the person onto their side by pulling on the bent knee
6. The top arm should be supporting the head and the bottom arm will stop you rolling them too far
7. Open their airway by gently tilting their head back and lifting their chin, and check that nothing is blocking their airway
8. Stay with the person and monitor their condition until help arrives



[nhs.uk/conditions/first-aid/recovery-position/](http://nhs.uk/conditions/first-aid/recovery-position/)

## Help and support

**Concerned that you or a friend might have a problem with alcohol or drugs?**

Below are details of services that can help.

### Support at the University

Your **GP (doctor)** can offer you support, advice, referral to specialist help or medical treatment. If you are registered with the University of Nottingham Health Service, Cripps Health Centre, telephone **0115 846 8888** to make an appointment.

### The University Counselling Service

A service for students and staff providing free confidential counselling, group therapy and workshops. The Service also offers support to those concerned about the welfare of a friend, housemate, relative or colleague. Call **0115 951 3695** or email **counselling.service@nottingham.ac.uk**

### Student Service Centres

If alcohol and/or drugs are interfering with your studies Student Service Centres offer support, guidance and information and can signpost to

school welfare officers and local specialist services.

**nottingham.ac.uk/  
studentservices**

### Students' Union Advice

Information, advice and representation on all aspects of student welfare and education. Advisors are available to give advice over the phone or by email.

Appointments (including telephone appointments) can be made by calling

**0115 846 8730** or emailing  
**suadvice@nottingham.ac.uk**

### Nightline

Is a confidential listening and information service run by students for students. Trained listeners are available from 7pm–8am every night during term-time.

**0115 951 4985 (14985 internal)**  
**nightlineanon@nottingham.ac.uk**  
**nottinghamnightline.co.uk**

## Specialist Services

### Nottingham city

**Nottingham Recovery Network** (NRN) deal with referrals to adult drug and alcohol services.

NRN deliver a complete and confidential access, advice, support, treatment and recovery service in Nottingham. Telephone or drop in for advice and an assessment of your needs. Information and help line:

**0800 066 5362**  
**nottinghamrecovery  
network.com**

### Chill Out Sound Support

Is part of NRN and deals specifically with recreational and club drugs use. If you need any support or information around this text or call **07891 514 257**.

### Explore Family

Nottingham Explore Family is a free and confidential family service for anyone affected by someone else's drug or alcohol use in Nottingham City.  
**0115 978 7161**

### Nottingham County

**New Directions –  
Nottinghamshire  
Change, Grow, Live (CGL)**

Is a free and confidential drug and alcohol service for adults.

**0115 896 0798**  
**notts@cgl.org.uk**

### Derby

**Derby Drug and Alcohol  
Services**

Provides advice, information and support. The service is provided jointly by Derbyshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, Phoenix Futures and Aquarius.  
**0300 790 0265**



## Other services and useful websites

The NHS provides information on alcohol and drug use.  
[nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk)

### Alcoholics Anonymous

East Midlands (Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire)  
**0115 941 7100**  
[alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk](https://alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk)

### Drinkaware

Provides advice, information and tools to help people make better choices about their drinking.  
[drinkaware.co.uk](https://drinkaware.co.uk)

### Alcohol Concern

A national charity which campaigns for effective policy and improved services for those affected by alcohol.  
[alcoholconcern.org.uk](https://alcoholconcern.org.uk)

### Frank

[talktofrank.com](https://talktofrank.com)

Please be aware that information about local service provision is correct May 2018. For up-to-date information please go to [nottingham.ac.uk/currentstudents/healthy](https://nottingham.ac.uk/currentstudents/healthy)

## Need help getting home, look out for:

### Nottingham Night Owls

A service for student's safety and well-being on nights out. The Owls will assist in getting you home safely and provide students with information and helpful supplies such as water, first aid, food and warmth.

The Owls are out in Nottingham every Wednesday and Thursday night and can be contacted 12–4am on **0115 794 1580**.  
[su.nottingham.ac.uk/volunteering/volunteering-opportunities/student-led-projects/nottingham-night-owl/](https://su.nottingham.ac.uk/volunteering/volunteering-opportunities/student-led-projects/nottingham-night-owl/)

### Safer Taxi Scheme

DG taxis and UoNSU have joined forces to make sure a safe cab ride home is always in reach.

Get yourself on the fixed price list by texting **TAXI to 80818**. You'll be able to access fixed rates by booking your taxi through DG on **0115 950 0500**.

### Street Pastors

A project of the Malt Cross. On Friday and Saturday evenings, teams of church volunteers go out onto the streets between 10pm and 3am and care for and look after people enjoying Nottingham's night life. Find yourself in a vulnerable situation - ask any door staff or taxi marshall and they will call a street pastor to help.  
[maltcross.com/charity/street-pastors](https://maltcross.com/charity/street-pastors)