

## Alcohol related crime

Alcohol-related crime features prominently in incidents recorded during festive occasions. Drinking large quantities of alcohol before going out to bars and nightclubs is dangerous. You could end up in a Police cell, in the hospital A&E or you could end up getting left at home because you're simply too drunk to go out at all. Drinking excessively can make you vulnerable to crime and/or or make you engage in criminal behaviour.

The festive period is a time for people to socialise and enjoy themselves and everyone is urged to be responsible and consider the consequences of drinking excessive amounts of alcohol.

If you are going on a night out, regardless with whom of what you're celebrating, make sure you are not an offender or a victim of alcohol-related crime by following a few tips.



### Consider the following advice

**Go later:** Try turning up to the bar/party later than usual, to minimise your drinking time, or kick off with a soft drink to stop you feeling so thirsty.

**Water:** Drink water before you go out so that you don't start the evening feeling thirsty, and drink some water/soft drink during your night as this keeps you hydrated. If you drink a cup of water before you go to bed at night it will reduce the effect of the alcohol on your body

**Food:** Eat well before you drink and your body will be better equipped to soak up the alcohol. The after-night-out takeaway is another drinking tradition, however, why wait until the night's nearly over to load up on fast food? A meal before you go out and snacks between drinks can help slow down the absorption of alcohol, helping you stay in control. With a full stomach you simply don't drink as much as the other way round - never drink alcohol on an empty stomach.

**Mixing drinks:** Try not to mix your drinks; you're only adding to the number of toxins that your body has to deal with. If you're planning on a session, stick to one type of drink. Alternate alcohol with a soft drink.

**Binge drinking:** This is dangerous; your body can only process one unit of alcohol per hour. If you can pace your drinking, and know when enough is enough, you will feel a lot better the next day. Before you start drinking, be sure you know when to stop. This can be hard when everyone else is boozing, but practise makes perfect and it will avoid bad hangovers. Don't feel you have to drink every time a round is ordered. Discuss and agree this with a couple of friends at the beginning of the evening and don't be worried about saying that you can't keep up with the one who drinks like a camel! Consider daily unit guidelines and go further by having bottles of beer or halves instead of pints and choosing a smaller glass for your wine.

**Security:** Never leave your drink unattended - this makes it easy for your drink to be spiked. Always refuse a drink offered to you by a stranger. Lastly, drink out of bottles and only bottles that are opened in your sight. This will prevent someone 'spiking' (putting a drug in) your drink. Walk away from trouble. Fights ruin everyone's night. You could get seriously injured as well as getting banned from every bar in the village. Glasses and bottles are used in fights - don't take them outside bars and clubs.

**Getting home after a night out:** Don't go off with people you have just met; even criminals can be charming. If walking it is best to be accompanied by friends. Alternatively use a taxi or if available public transport. If in a group of people get a lift with one in the group who has not had a drink. Don't get in a car if the driver's been drinking. Never drink and drive.

**Remember the night out:** Drinking to a sensible limit can make you the centre of attention and you'll have free recall of the events the following day. Drinking to excess can make you unpopular amongst your friends and the new people you might meet, and has a tendency to wipe your memory of the behaviour that led to your unpopularity.

NEVER drink so much that you can't remember anything; remember you are very vulnerable if you are drunk

Drink sensibly and enjoy your night out

*Posted; 20<sup>th</sup> December 2014*