

Taking care of you...

- Living with, or caring about a person who drinks too much can feel like a rollercoaster with many ups and downs. You may experience high levels of stress, anxiety, frustration and a lack of energy – particularly if you are not able to share your concerns and worries with someone else.
- The person you are concerned about may welcome help if offered, but if is refused, you can still seek support for you yourself.
- Support can sometimes be obtained from friends or family members, however you may feel isolated or just prefer to talk to somebody outside of your immediate family/social circle.
- Here at the Isle of Man Alcohol Advisory Service we have a team of trained and experienced counsellors who can offer you advice, counselling, support and understanding in a safe and confidential environment.
- The person with the drink problem does not have to be attending this service in order for you to benefit from our support. You are welcome to come along as a service user in your own right.



How to make contact?

Tel: 627656 Text: 426400
Email: aas@iom.com Web: www.motiv8.im

Practical tips

- Be open and honest with the person you are concerned about regarding the impact of their drinking on them and you – explore their feelings as well as your own.
- Find out what support is available and gather information. Encourage the person who is drinking to seek help. Obtain support for yourself even if the drinker will not do so.
- Avoid 'enabling' behaviour such as making excuses, covering up, phoning work etc. No matter how well meaning, this will not help in the long term and will just give the drinker permission to carry on drinking.
- Be realistic – cutting down rather than stopping drinking altogether may be an initial compromise. In some circumstances it can be dangerous for people to stop drinking suddenly so it is always best to get advice on this.
- Be consistent in your approach. Set ground rules around what you think is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.
- Look after yourself, take time out & keep up your own hobbies and interests regardless of what is going on at home.

What to do next?

If you would like further information or wish to talk to somebody about your concerns then please feel able to contact us by telephone, e mail or text.

All of our contact details can be found overleaf.



Does Someone You Care About Drink Too Much Alcohol?



627656
Text: 426400



AAS Isle of Man is managed by Motiv8 Addiction Services
Manx Registered Charity No. 275

aas@iom.com

Are you concerned that somebody you care about is drinking too much?

If this question applies to you, please continue to read the rest of this leaflet to find out the following:

- Who we are, where we are, what support we can offer you and how you can contact us
- Some of the common issues which can be experienced by the family members of problem drinkers
- Practical tips which may be helpful to you in coping with the situation

Who are we?

- The IOM Alcohol Advisory service is a branch of Motiv8 Addiction Services, which is a local registered charity.
 - We offer help to anyone who is concerned about their own or someone else's drinking.
 - We are committed to providing a safe and non-judgemental service to all sections of our island community.
- Our service is free and confidential. Further information regarding our confidentiality policy can be made available to you.

What is problem drinking?

A person does not have to be drinking all day or every day to have a drink problem. It can sometimes be very difficult to tell when a person's 'normal' social drinking progresses into 'problem drinking'.

Think about the person you are worried about. Are you able to answer 'yes' to any of the following questions?

- Are family, relationships, responsibilities or work affected by their drinking?
- Do accidents, arguments or fights occur regularly because of drinking?
- Does life revolve around alcohol or do they become sick or irritable if they don't have a drink?
- Does the person become angry or defensive when their drinking is discussed?
- Do they try and hide or minimise their drinking?
- Are they drinking more than sensible limits in a way that is causing you or them a problem?
- Are there any financial problems which are a direct result of the persons drinking?
- Is the person displaying physical signs of alcohol dependency such as tremors or blackouts?
- Does the person you are concerned about make regular and unfulfilled promises to cut down their alcohol consumption?

This is not an exhaustive list but it helps to give an insight into the sorts of indicators which may suggest that alcohol is causing problems for you or the person who is drinking.

Remember – even occasional drunken episodes can cause problems

What is considered sensible drinking?

The following recommended limits are only general guidelines. There can be increased health risks/after effects if someone is pregnant, is an older person, has physical or mental health issues or is taking medication.

Men



No more than 21 units per week
3 to 4 units per day max
At least 2 alcohol free days per week

Women



No more than 14 units per week
2 to 3 units per day max
At least 2 alcohol free days per week

- 1 pub measure of spirits 40% (35 ml) = **1 unit**
- 1 Alcopop 5% (275ml) = **1.4 units**
- 1 75cl Bottle of 12% wine (750ml) = **9 units**
- 1 pint 4% Beer/Lager = **2.3 units**

How can problem drinking affect relationships?

Problem drinking often impacts significantly on relationships with family and friends. Each situation is different, however if someone you care about is drinking too much here are some common experiences which you may be able to identify with:

- You may experience a wide variety of negative emotions including embarrassment, resentment, shame, isolation and anger
 - Children may feel unable to bring friends to the family home or express their emotions, fearful it will cause further drinking
- You may try to protect the drinker by making excuses on their behalf – pretending to the rest of the world that everything is ok
- Shouting, arguing or fighting may follow a drinking binge. This can make life unpredictable and potentially harmful to all concerned.

