

## UK ALCOHOL FACTS

(From varied sources). Updated March 2014

Over 10m adults in England now drink more than the recommended daily limit, with 2.6m of them drinking more than twice that. A quarter of adults in England drink at hazardous levels. The number of dependent drinkers now stands at 1.6 million and the number that go into hospital for alcohol-related reasons rose by 52% between 1996 and 2006. There are 7.6 million 'hazardous drinkers'. For women the binge drinking rate increased from 7% in 1998 to 16% in 2006, similarly in men the proportion rose from 20% to 24% over the same period. There was also a similar growth in harmful drinkers and dependent drinkers.

20% of people in England aged 16 or over are estimated to engage in binge drinking. The proportion of people who abstain from alcohol altogether increased from 10 per cent in 1998 to 15 per cent in 2009.

The number of hospital admissions due to alcohol misuse was 1.1 million in 2009/10, a 100% increase since 2002/03. The number by the end of 2011 was around 1.5 million. In Accident and Emergency Departments (A&E), 70% of attendances in the early hours and 40% of weekend attendances are caused by alcohol.

Alcohol misuse is now estimated to cost the NHS £2.7 billion a year, almost twice the equivalent figure in 2001. But the cost of alcohol to society as a whole is even greater, estimated to stand at £17- 22 billion. Overall probably around 1 in 16 of all hospital admissions are for alcohol-related causes.

1 in 5 patients presenting to primary health care are likely to be excessive drinkers, and based on the average list size, each GP will see 364 excessive drinkers in a 12 month period. Problem drinkers consult their GPs twice as often as the average patient.

A 2007 figure for the cost of alcohol to the economy (including a human cost for the reduced quality of life adjusted years) was estimated at £55.1 billion by The National Social Marketing Centre.

In 2011 there were 8748 deaths directly related to alcohol in UK.

The alcohol-related mortality rate of men in the most disadvantaged socio-economic class is 3.5 times higher than for men in the least disadvantaged class, while for women the figure is 5.7 times.

An estimated 9990 people were casualties of drink-driving accidents in the UK in 2011 including 280 who were killed and 1290 who suffered serious injury.

Victims believed the offender(s) to be under the influence of alcohol in around half (47%) of all violent incidents, or 917,000 offences.

Alcohol-related crime costs £11 billion per year (2010-11 costs, England only).

The number of deaths from alcohol-related causes doubled in the 15 years to 2006.

### Young People Specific Facts

In 2010 under half of 11-15 year olds had ever had an alcohol drink (45%) continuing a decline from a high of 61% in 2003. But those that do drink are consuming more than ever, twice as much as in 1990.

And, children are starting to drink earlier and are drinking more. In 2010 children aged 11-13 years old that had drunk consumed 50% more than in 2007.

In European studies, UK teenagers are amongst those most likely to report frequently drinking heavily, being intoxicated and experiencing adverse effects from their drinking.

UK teenagers also have the most positive expectations of being drunk.

The number of drinkers under 16 has doubled since 1990.

In 2010/11 there were 198,900 admissions where the primary reason was solely consumption of alcohol. This is a 2.1 per cent increase since 2009/10 when there were 194,800 admissions of this type and a 40 per cent increase since 2002/03 when there were around 142,000 such admissions.

In 2010/11, there were 1,168,300 alcohol related admissions to hospital based on the broad measure (alcohol the primary and secondary reason). This is an increase of 11 per cent on the 2009/10 figure (1,056,900) and more than twice as many as in 2002/03 (510,700). Comparisons over time are tricky because of different ways the figures were put together. Adjusted figures show a 49 per cent increase from an estimated 783,300 in 2002/03 but a 3 per cent decrease from 1,208,100 in 2009/10.

There has been a long-term downward trend in the proportion of adults who reported drinking in the week prior to interview. In 1998 75 per cent of men and 59 per cent of women drank in the week prior to interview compared to 68 per cent of men and 54 per cent of women in 2010.

13 per cent of secondary school pupils aged 11 to 15 reported drinking alcohol in the week prior to interview in 2010 compared with 18 per cent of pupils in 2009 and 26 per cent in 2001. It is estimated that 2.6 million children in the UK are living with parents who are drinking hazardously and 705,000 living with dependent drinkers

There has been a fall in recent years in the proportion of pupils who think that drinking is acceptable for someone of their age. In 2010 32 per cent thought it was okay for someone of their age to drink once a week compared to 46 per cent in 2003. Similarly 11 per cent of pupils thought that it was OK for someone of their age to get drunk once a week compared to 20 per cent who thought that in 2003.

In 2011, there were 167,764 prescription items for drugs for the treatment of alcohol dependency prescribed in primary care settings or NHS hospitals and dispensed in the community. This is an increase of 4.7 per cent on the 2010 figure (160,181) and an increase of 63 per cent on the 2003 figure (102,741).

The Net Ingredient Cost (NIC) of these prescription items was £2.49 million in 2011. This is an increase of 3.3 per cent on the 2010 figure (£2.41 million) and an increase of 45 per cent on the 2003 figure (£1.72 million).

(Source: <http://www.hscic.gov.uk/pubs/alcohol12>. Accessed 18/03/14, 12.25pm)

Around 12,500 cases of cancer are caused each year in the UK by alcohol (4% of total cases).

Source: <http://www.drinkaware.co.uk/check-the-facts>. Accessed 18/03/14, 16.00pm

The UK Chief Medical Officers recommend an alcohol-free childhood is the healthiest and best option.

Research shows that the earlier a child starts drinking, the higher their chances of developing alcohol abuse or dependence in their teenage years and adult life – children who drink before the age of 15 are most susceptible to alcohol misuse in later life.

Although the number of 11-15 year olds who have ever drunk alcohol has been going down since 2003, more than two out of five (43%) have tried alcohol and those who are, are drinking twice as much as they were in 1990.

Almost 65,000 young people every year need treatment in hospital A&E departments because of alcohol.

Each day in 2009, thirty six under-18s were admitted to hospital in England.

UK teenagers are amongst those most likely in Europe to report frequently drinking heavily, being intoxicated and experiencing adverse effects from their drinking.

(Source: <http://www.drinkaware.co.uk/check-the-facts/health-effects-of-alcohol/your-child-or-teenagers-health/your-child-or-teenagers-health..> Accessed 18/03/14, 16.20pm)

## SEPT 2003 ALCOHOL FACTS - source - the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit

Annual Cost To The UK - £20 billion a year	Over 90% of British adults drink alcohol
Working Days Lost - 17 million days are lost to hangovers and drink-related illness each year.	One in three men drink more than they should
Annual Cost To Employers - estimated at £6.4 bn	One in five women drink more than they should
Cost To The NHS - is in the region of £1.7bn.	Teenagers are drinking earlier and more heavily than ever before
Billions are spent clearing up alcohol-related crime and social problems.	Young, white, unemployed men are more likely to abuse alcohol
In addition, alcohol-related problems are responsible for 22,000 premature deaths each year.	Women in skilled jobs drink more heavily than other women
There are 1.2 million incidents of alcohol-related violence a year.	Britons spend £30bn on alcohol each year
Around 40% of A&E admissions are alcohol-related. Between midnight and 5am that figure rises to 70%.	The government raises £7bn through taxes on alcohol
Alcohol-related accidents and illnesses land around 150,000 people in hospital each year.	Alcohol-related crime costs £7.3bn
Up to 1.3 million children are affected by parents with drink problems, the report said.	Another £4.7bn is spent on the human and emotional costs of alcohol-related crime
They are also more likely to have problems later in life themselves.	Some 22,000 people die prematurely each year because of alcohol misuse
	Young people are binge-drink at an earlier age.
	The binge-drinking period that was once confined to the late teens now often runs from 16 to 24.

### Recommended alcohol limits

- Men should drink no more than 21 units of alcohol per week
- Women should drink no more than 14 units of alcohol per week
- One unit of alcohol is half a pint of beer or a small glass of wine
- Binge drinking is classed as consuming more than 10 units of alcohol in a single session for men and seven units for women

### Solutions?

Government - changes to pub opening hours by having variable closing times to reduce disorder. Drive to give more info to young people.

Charities - more money to be spent on alcohol treatment, education and social care in families.

Educationalists - strong recommendations to tackle the problem, including labelling of alcohol content and health warnings on drinks.

Industry - need to tackling and treat alcohol misuse and get to the root causes of why people drink to excess and indulge in anti-social behaviour. Also to develop mass media campaigns to curb excessive drinking, funded at the same level as government drink-drive campaigns over the years

### Your Ideas..

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