**Safe Alcohol consumption**

**About alcohol and coronavirus:**

* Not drinking alcohol at all or drinking no more than two standard drinks per day is a great way to maintain good health.
* Consuming alcohol products increases your risk of disease and injury. The more alcohol you consume, the more damage it does. Every additional drink increases your risk of developing eight types of cancer. So even though life has changed due to the outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19), it is still important to drink no more than:
  + two standard drinks on any day to reduce your risk of disease
  + four standard drinks on a single occasion to reduce your risk of injury.
* We all know how important it is to keep pressure off the health system at the moment. In 2017/18 there were over 35,700 hospital admissions caused by alcohol products in Victoria. If we all drink at low risk levels, we can do our bit to make sure that people working in our healthcare system can focus on treating people with coronavirus.
* Levels of anxiety often increase the day after drinking alcohol. If you’re already feeling anxious about coronavirus then it’s best to limit the amount of alcohol you consume to no more than two standard drinks per day. Instead you might want to try other activities that can reduce stress and anxiety, such as connecting with friends and family online, exercising or meditating.
* The quality of your sleep can be reduced when you drink alcohol products. This becomes more likely the more alcohol you consume. To make sure you get a goodnight’s rest try not to have more than two standard drinks on any day that you’re drinking.

**Does drinking alcohol protect me from coronavirus infection?**

* No. Alcohol products can have a negative impact on your immunity and limit your ability to fight off infections. Reducing the amount of alcohol you drink is not only good for your general health and wellbeing, but may also protect against infections.

**Should I be drinking with my friends over apps such as House party?**

* The social media platforms and apps that allow us to stay connected to our friends and family during the coronavirus crisis have become vital. But that doesn’t mean we should bring alcohol into the mix. Alcohol lowers immunity, increases anxiety and if consumed above low risk drinking guidelines, can increase our risk of disease or injury.
* There are other things you can do instead of drinking while connecting with friends and family members through these apps. Some of the apps allow you to challenge your family members to games, share your baking fails and triumphs or take your book club online.

**Should I be drinking in front of my children?**

* Research has found young people who are exposed to their parents’ drinking are at a higher risk of starting to drink alcohol. Role modelling low-risk drinking practices is a positive action parents and other carers can take. If you drink alcohol products at home, consider modelling behaviour that you would expect from your children.

**Useful tools**

* For free and confidential alcohol and drug information or support, call the Alcohol and Drug Foundation’s [DrugInfo line](https://adf.org.au/resources/druginfo/) on [1300 85 85 84](tel:1300%2085%2085%2084) or email [druginfo@adf.org.au](mailto:druginfo@adf.org.au)
* [Daybreak](https://www.hellosundaymorning.org/daybreak/) offers peer support from other people reducing their drinking and also includes free advice from health coaches.
* To stay healthy and well, you might also want to consider taking a break from alcohol. [Hello Sunday Morning](https://www.hellosundaymorning.org/) has been supporting people to change their drinking since 2010.
* **For further support and resources visit the Alcohol and Drug Foundation** [**https://adf.org.au/covid-19/**](https://adf.org.au/covid-19/)

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<https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/media-and-resources/publications/health-promotion-messages-covid>