

Are you concerned about your drinking or the drinking of someone close to you?

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If you are concerned about how much alcohol you're drinking, but don't know where to begin, know that you don't have to make changes alone. There is a range of help available.

Assessing alcohol use

As a first step, it can be helpful to assess your alcohol intake to understand whether you could benefit from cutting back or giving up. This is especially important if drinking is impacting your daily activities, relationships, health or wellbeing, or is putting you or others at risk.

There are external factors that influence whether and how much you drink. Sometimes these factors can make it hard to identify whether your alcohol use is impacting your wellbeing or putting your health at risk. This can include the drinking patterns of your loved ones and friends as well as your social routines.

Signs that you could benefit from reducing your drinking or giving up alcohol:

- You feel like your drinking is impacting your physical or mental health or wellbeing.
- You would like to cut down or quit drinking, but you have not yet been able to.
- You sometimes find it hard to stop drinking once you have started.
- Your loved ones, friends or a health professional have been concerned about how much alcohol you drink.
- Your drinking has interfered with daily activities or responsibilities, such as your job, or your relationships.
- You or someone else has been injured as a result of your drinking.
- You have experienced memory loss after drinking.
- Your alcohol use is impacting others around you.

You can complete an online questionnaire for initial guidance on whether your alcohol intake is putting you at risk. www.turningpoint.org.au have a helpful alcohol [self-assessment tool](#).

Talking to someone else about their drinking

If you are concerned about the alcohol use of someone you care about, it can help to have an honest conversation with them, and offer them your non-judgmental support.

It's important to approach a conversation with empathy and sensitivity. Try to pick a place to talk where they are likely to feel safe and comfortable, and a time when they are feeling calm and open to talking.

If you think a conversation would lead to you being unsafe, then it's best to reach out for support. There are family support services and family violence services that may be able to help.

If you can safely have a conversation, here are some tips that might help:

- Ask open ended questions to encourage them to talk, use positive and supportive language, and be ready to listen without blame, criticism or judgment.
- A good conversation starter might be, "I've noticed you've been drinking more lately. How are you feeling?" or "I'm a bit worried about your drinking".
- If they are not ready to talk and get defensive or upset, be patient and try again another time. Offer your support when they are ready.

Seeking support

There are many services you can tap into for support to cut back or give up drinking alcohol, or to help you support someone else.

If someone else's drinking is having an impact on you, there is support available for you too.

Your doctor is a great place to start. If you have been drinking heavily for a long time it can be dangerous to reduce or give up alcohol on your own. A doctor can help you to safely withdraw from alcohol, or refer you to a specialist service. You can find a local GP at www.healthdirect.gov.au.

Below is a list of other services that can support you or someone you care about.

Alcohol support services

NATIONAL ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG HOTLINE

The [National Alcohol and Other Drug Hotline](#) offers free and confidential advice about alcohol and other drugs.

1800 250 015

HELLO SUNDAY MORNING

Hello Sunday Morning is an organisation committed to supporting people who have made the decision to abstain, take a break or simply review their alcohol consumption. Their Daybreak app provides support and connects a community of people. They also provide one-on-one counselling with professional health coaches, and all registration costs are subsidised by the Australian Government.

1300 403 196

www.hellosundaymorning.org

SOBER IN THE COUNTRY

Sober in the country is a national rural grassroots Australian charity, who are working to deliver national alcohol awareness via real talk. Through Bush Tribe, they provide a peer support space where bush people can yarn with other bush people to reduce drinking and access an accepting space to chat with like-minded people.

www.soberinthecountry.org

SMART RECOVERY AUSTRALIA

Through a free group program addressing addiction to alcohol, Smart Recovery Australia empowers people to help themselves and each other manage problematic behaviour for the improvement of the health and social wellbeing of the community. Guided by trained peers and professionals, participants using a variety of cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) and motivational tools and techniques.

www.smartrecoveryaustralia.com.au

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS AUSTRALIA

AA is an informal society of more than 2 million recovering alcoholics who provide each other with strength and hope so that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

1300 222 222

www.aa.org.au

TURNING POINT

Turning Point provides a wide range of clinical care and support for people and families affected by addiction, including those seeking help for the first time, as well as empowering clinicians to respond effectively. Services include 24/7 online counselling to people adversely affected by alcohol, other drugs, and gambling.

1800 888 236

www.turningpoint.org.au

ALCOHOL AND DRUG FOUNDATION

The Alcohol and Drug Foundation provides information on minimising alcohol harm. Their Path2Help tool helps you find support and information tailored to your specific needs.

1300 85 85 84

www.adf.org.au

Family support

FAMILY DRUG SUPPORT

Family drug support provides up to date information on all aspects of alcohol and drug use to the families of alcohol and other drug users. They provide a 24-hour, 7 day a week helpline to support people who are worried about the alcohol and drug use of their family and loved ones.

1300 368 186

www.fds.org.au

AL-ANON FAMILY GROUPS

Al-Anon helps families and friends of alcoholics recover from the effects of living with someone whose drinking is a problem. They provide a range of services offering hope and recovery to people affected by the alcoholism of a relative or friend.

1300 252 666

www.al-anon.org.au

SUPPORTING FAMILY CONVERSATIONS

The Supporting Family Conversations website has been designed to meet parents' and schools' information needs, and to support communication between parents and their adolescent children about alcohol and cybersafety.

www.supportingfamilyconversations.com.au

Alcohol and mental health

The following organisations can provide specialist and non-judgemental support and guidance for people seeking help for mental health and alcohol concerns.

BEYOND BLUE

1300 22 4636

www.beyondblue.org.au

LIFELINE

13 11 14

www.lifeline.org.au

KIDS HELP LINE

1800 55 1800

www.kidshelpline.com.au

REACH OUT

au.reachout.com

Family and domestic violence

1800 RESPECT

1800respect.org.au provides 24/7 domestic violence and sexual assault counselling and support.

1800 737 732