



Alcohol and other drugs

You came to the emergency department after using alcohol or other drugs. You have been checked and are now safe to go home. This sheet explains how to look after yourself and where to find support.

What is it?

Alcohol and drugs change how your brain and body work. They can slow your breathing, affect your heart, and cloud your judgement. Mixing them, or mixing them with medicines, is much more dangerous. The effects can last many hours, and you may feel tired, shaky or low for a day or two afterwards.

Looking after yourself at home

- Have a responsible adult stay with you for the next 12 to 24 hours.
- Do not drink more alcohol or use any drugs today.
- Drink water and eat small, simple meals when you feel able.
- Rest and sleep on your side, not flat on your back.
- Do not drive, cycle, swim or use machines until you are completely clear-headed.
- Keep any sleeping tablets or strong pain medicines out of reach until you are fully recovered.

Medicines

- Only take medicines your doctor has prescribed today. Follow the packet or your doctor's instructions.
- Do not mix alcohol with sleeping tablets, strong painkillers or anxiety medicines.

Follow-up

- See your family doctor or health centre within a week to talk about your health and support.
- If you want to cut down or stop, ask your doctor about local support and treatment services.
- If you are worried about your mood or safety, tell your doctor or someone you trust today.

Come back to the emergency department or call an ambulance straight away if:

- You cannot be woken up, or you are very hard to wake
- Breathing is slow, noisy, or stops for periods
- A seizure (fit), or new confusion
- Vomiting blood, or vomiting while very drowsy
- Chest pain, or a very fast or irregular heartbeat
- Thoughts of harming yourself or ending your life



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This leaflet is general information to support the advice your doctor or nurse gave you today. It does not replace their advice. If you are worried, seek medical help.

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