

Read and discuss with your partner, the key information below regarding lower risk drinking.

Adults who drink no alcohol at all, or less than 14 units per week, are at lower risk of the following long-term effects:

- Liver disease and heart disease
- Cancers such as mouth, throat and breast cancers
- Damage to the brain or nervous system

Alcohol-free days and having only a few units a day, rather than lots of units in a short time, reduce the risk of the following short-term effects:

- Accidents that result in injuries
- Misjudging risks
- Alcohol poisoning (which can include vomiting and losing consciousness)

Alcoholic drink	Units
 <p>1 pint of beer or cider with 3.5% alcohol (many beers have a higher % of alcohol so are more units)</p>	2
 <p>1 can of regular lager or cider with 4% alcohol</p>	2
 <p>1 pint of strong cider with 5% alcohol</p>	3
 <p>1 medium glass of wine with 12% alcohol</p>	2
 <p>1 single shot of a spirit with 40% alcohol</p>	1
 <p>1 bottle of alcopop with 5% alcohol</p>	1.5

Draw or write the number of alcoholic drinks that an adult could drink and be considered a 'lower-risk drinker.' Consider the type, quantity and frequency of drinks in your answer.

Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	

Give three top-tips for lowering the risk related to alcohol consumption:

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 1 pint of beer or cider with 3.5% alcohol (many beers have a higher % of alcohol so are more units)	2

What is helpful and what is risky about each of the patterns below?

Circle the pattern that is lowest risk (is least likely to cause illness or injury).

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
A							
B							
C							

	What is helpful?	What is risky?
A		
B		
C		

A I don't think a person can get in trouble for growing cannabis at home.

B I think cannabis can cause harm.

C I heard that cannabis is used medicinally so it must be safe.

D I think most people use cannabis.

E I heard cannabis is a Class B drug.

F I think it's safe because it's from a plant and natural.

G I think driving following cannabis use can increase the likelihood of car accidents.

H I heard cannabis is safer than alcohol.

I I think cannabis is added to some vapes so it must be ok to use.

If a person has used cannabis, they are at increased risk of having an accident if they drive. This is because cannabis decreases attention, reduces the speed of information processing and slows response times - all of which are essential for driving safely.

Medicines based on cannabis are now prescribed in very rare cases by a small number of specialists in the UK. Medical cannabis has lower levels of the compound THC that gives users the 'high' associated with cannabis use.

Not everything that occurs naturally is inherently safe. Different strains of cannabis have different levels of the compounds CBD and THC. It's hard to tell what the balance between these compounds is and therefore difficult to judge how harmful a particular batch of cannabis will be.

Prosecution for possession, supply or intent to supply cannabis follows the same process whether the person grew the plants at home or bought prepared cannabis.

Cannabis is a Class B drug. Previously it had been downgraded to Class C, but it was reclassified to Class B again in 2009. This means that penalties include a prison sentence of up to 5 years for possession and up to 14 years for intent to supply or supply. In both cases there can also be an unlimited fine.

Smoking cannabis can cause breathing difficulties, and increases the risk of lung cancer, even if tobacco is not used. Cannabis can harm mental health including reducing motivation, impairing memory and cognitive function, as well as causing paranoia and anxiety. Using cannabis can also harm relationships and affect a person's studies/work.

Cannabis has different long-term effects to alcohol, so it is often dangerous in different ways. With varying THC levels in cannabis and higher levels in newer strains, it is impossible to compare the effects of all strains of cannabis to alcohol. It is especially unsafe to mix alcohol and cannabis.

In 2023, only 7% of 11-15-year-olds had ever tried cannabis (meaning 93% had not). This is a distinct decline from previous years and demonstrates that most young people do not use cannabis.

Vapes (e-cigarettes) contain a mix of chemicals and nicotine. Vapes are less harmful than smoking but that does not mean they are risk-free, and the risks may be increased when other chemicals are added. Some contain CBD, which is found in cannabis plants but does not produce a high. Some illegally produced vapes have been found to contain illegal substances, such as THC, which is also found in cannabis. This produces a high and has also been linked to paranoia. The risks from these illegal vapes are much greater.

A I don't think a person can get in trouble for growing cannabis at home.

B I think cannabis can cause harm.

C I heard that cannabis is used medicinally so it must be safe.

D I think most people use cannabis.

E I heard cannabis is a Class B drug.

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- Driving under the influence of cannabis increases the risks.
- Medicines based on cannabis are used in very rare cases by a small number of specialists.
- Not everything that occurs naturally is safe and it's hard to tell how harmful a particular batch of cannabis will be.
- Someone buying cannabis or growing it at home would face the same prosecution for possession, supply or intent to supply.
- Cannabis is a Class B drug. Someone could be given a prison sentence of up to 5 years for possession and up to 14 years for intent to supply or supply. There can also be an unlimited fine.
- Smoking cannabis can cause breathing difficulties, and increases the risk of lung cancer, even if tobacco is not used. Cannabis can harm mental health including reduced motivation, reduced memory, paranoia, and anxiety.
- Cannabis has different long-term effects to alcohol, so it is often dangerous in other ways. It is especially unsafe to mix alcohol and cannabis.
- Some illegally produced vapes have been found to contain illegal substances, such as THC, which is found in cannabis. The risks from these illegal vapes are much greater.
- In 2023, only 7% of 11-15-year-olds had ever tried cannabis (meaning 93% had not). This is lower than previous years and shows that most young people do not use cannabis.