

Alcohol And Covid-19



Are we drinking more?

- One in five Australian households have reported buying more alcohol than usual during the COVID-19 outbreak, according to new data released today.
- National polling by YouGov Galaxy, commissioned by the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) found that a majority of these households also reported drinking more than usual and had concerns about their alcohol use and the drinking of others in their household.

Is drinking more bad?

- Drinking more lowers our immune system which increases the risk of illness and infection. This includes infections such as COVID-19.
- Drinking more can also affect sleep and make us more anxious, depressed and agitated.
- Parents/carers may role model unhealthy drinking behaviour to children.
- Drinking alcohol can decrease our level of patience and may increase the risk of arguments, misunderstanding and family violence.
- Drinking alcohol can lead to an increase in accidents placing additional pressure on the health care system. Health care services will be stretched as COVID-19 spreads.

Then, why are bottle shops considered essential services?

- The federal government has classed bottle shops as essential services meaning that they, unlike other businesses, are allowed to remain open.
- Closing bottle shops could lead to an increase in criminal activities like theft and violence.
- Some bottle shops have instated limits on the amount of alcohol you can purchase. These limits should be considered to be amounts of alcohol that last a long time.

What can you do to look after yourself and others?

- Try to stay within the draft Australian guidelines of no more than four standard drinks in any one day and no more than ten a week.
- Avoid temptations to stock up on alcohol. Reconsider if you need to have alcohol delivered.
- Aim to have at least two consecutive days alcohol free.

- Find other ways to relax, unwind or celebrate. Choose non-alcoholic drinks like sparkling mineral water, soda water, tea or coffee.
- Try to keep to normal work routines (e.g. avoid drinking during normal work hours).
- Be mindful of how you are feeling and try to avoid using alcohol to cope with boredom, loneliness or stress.
- Look after your physical and mental health by exercising often, eating well, sleeping well and staying connected with family and friends.
- Watch out for friends and family and suggest other ways to celebrate or wind down.

The Alcohol and Drug Foundation have compiled a list of alternatives to anyone looking to stay connected during social distancing.

- **Make your catch-ups virtual** by scheduling virtual dinner dates through video calling such as Zoom or Google hangouts or distance movie nights with the use of Netflix's 'Netflix Party' extension. There are also many free online games that can be played with friends over the internet
- **Try an activity together.** Pick a YouTube tutorial for a new skill, such as painting, drawing, origami, makeup, dancing or cooking. Recruit a few friends to all attempt the same tutorial and share your results.
- **Sign up for a fitness class.** Many gyms are now offering online classes for yoga, Pilates, and other living room-friendly exercise that you can sign up for together.
- **Do your 'been meaning to get to it' thing.** Most of us have something around the house we've been 'meaning to' get to – organise the wardrobe, sort through the overflowing cupboards, or a small home repair.
- **Loved one without internet access?** Setting a regular time to talk over the phone with an isolated person can help give you both something to look forward to. You can try reading over the phone or you could play a simple game. There are easy games you can still play over the phone, like 20 questions or 'Would you Rather?'.

Where to get help from yourself and others:

- National Alcohol and Other Drug Hotline 1800 250 015
- Alcohol and Drug Information Service on 1800 811 994
- Family Drug Support 1300 368 186
- Tasmanian Alcohol and Drug Services 1300 139 641
- Lifeline 13 11 14
- Contact a support group in your local area, such as Alcoholics Anonymous

Or find more information at the [Australian Department of Health website](#) or the [Tasmanian Government Coronavirus website](#)