

# CUT BACK ON ALCOHOL



**In Australia, drinking alcohol is sometimes seen as part of our culture with many believing it's a normal part of socialising. Apart from the obvious health and social problems associated with excessive or binge drinking, alcoholic drinks such as beer, wine and spirits contain a large amount of energy (measured in kilojoules). Therefore, just like any other food or drink, alcohol should be limited if you're trying to maintain a healthy weight.**

Although alcohol provides energy, it's not considered to be a healthy beverage as it doesn't provide the body with any extra nutrients. In fact, drinking alcohol can actually increase the amount of vitamins and minerals the body requires.

We recommend you drink no more than two standard alcoholic drinks on any day. Drinking more than this increases your lifetime risk of harm from alcohol-related disease or injury.

There are 29 kilojoules (7 calories) per gram of alcohol. A 'standard' alcoholic drink contains 10 grams of alcohol, which equates to 290 kilojoules from the alcohol alone (not to mention the sugars that are also usually present).

In addition to this, people often drink alcohol with soft drinks (ie. mixers) and snack foods, such as potato chips, pastries and nuts. These all add to your overall kilojoule intake.

'Low carb' beers and wines are now available, and while these are lower in carbohydrates, they're not necessarily a healthier option. The alcohol and kilojoule content in these "low carb" varieties is often very similar to standard types of beer and wine. Instead, consider a beverage with a lower alcohol content, such as a light beer. The energy you'll save by reducing alcohol far outweighs any benefit a "low-carb" beverage can offer.

## How much is a standard drink?

| Drink                               | Equivalent to a standard drink |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 375ml can/stubby low-strength beer  | = 0.8 standard drink           |
| 375ml can/stubby mid-strength beer  | = 1 standard drink             |
| 375ml can/stubby full-strength beer | = 1.4 standard drinks          |
| 375ml can/stubby low-carb beer      | = 1.4 standard drinks          |
| 100ml wine (13.5% alcohol)          | = 1 standard drink             |
| 30ml nip spirits                    | = 1 standard drink             |
| Can spirits (approx. 5% alcohol)    | = 1.2 to 1.7 standard drinks   |
| Can spirits (approx. 7% alcohol)    | = 1.6 to 2.4 standard drinks   |

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