

It may feel normal to drink more alcohol than usual in response to the stressors associated with COVID-19. Evidence shows that on the whole sexuality and gender diverse people drink more than the general population. Our drinking is not always harmful but can be harmful when we drink too much in one sitting or if we drink too frequently. If in the time of COVID-19 you find yourself drinking more than usual ACON has some strategies to help you reduce alcohol related harms and to modify drinking behaviours.

Alcohol, COVID-19 & Our Communities

Reduce the harms



SWITCH TO A LIGHTER OPTION

Swap out a full-strength beer with a mid, light, or zero alcohol option, or pour a smaller nip of spirits or glass of wine.

DON'T FORGET TO EAT

This helps to slow the absorption of alcohol to avoid getting drunk too quickly.



GO SLOW

Alternate between an alcoholic drink and a non-alcoholic one.



SET LIMITS

Set a limit before you start drinking, decide on an amount and stick to it. Decide on a number of days (and times) in which you'll have a drink.



SET A GOAL

Do you want to reduce how much you drink? Drink in less risky ways? Quit drinking altogether? Choose a goal that's realistic for you and make a plan to achieve it.

Consider alternatives

FIND OTHER WAYS TO SOCIALISE

If you find yourself organising video chats with your mates over drinks try cooking a meal simultaneously or a Netflix party instead.



DISTRACT YOURSELF

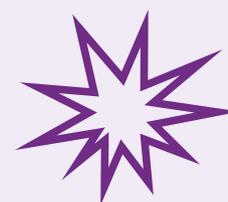
If you're drinking to cope with feelings of stress to pass time or address boredom, listen to those feelings, and try to respond to them in other ways: exercise, new hobbies, a new TV series.



TRY MINDFULNESS

If you have the urge to drink (outside of your limits), try mindfulness, acknowledge the urge and 'ride the wave' until you come out the other side. There are apps to help begin mindfulness practice, try [Headspace](#) or [Smiling Mind](#).

Make a change



RECOGNISE YOUR TRIGGERS

Keep a drink diary or journal and increase your awareness and understand your relationship with alcohol. It is important to be aware of our *internal triggers* (often our emotions, body sensations and thoughts) that lead us to drink. This awareness can allow us to make different choices in response.

WE'RE HERE FOR YOU:

ACON provides confidential counselling to people in our communities seeking support in relation to their substance use. Contact **ACON** on **(02) 9206 2000** or **1800 063 060** or go to acon.org.au. ACON's alcohol and drug website pivotpoint.org.au is a valuable resource at this time. You can also get in contact with the **Australian Drug Information Service (ADIS)** by phoning **1800 250 015**.



PIVOT POINT

