

# Substance misuse

**Alcohol and other drugs are powerful substances with the potential to harm those who use them.**

## What happens when you drink or use drugs?

The effects of drugs and alcohol depend very much on your environment and mood. You may feel more relaxed, talkative or sociable. However, you may also become emotional, irritable and unhappy. Drugs and alcohol can also impair your judgment and make you vulnerable. Mixing drugs and alcohol can also be particularly dangerous.

**Stimulants:** amphetamines, ecstasy, cocaine, anabolic steroids and 'poppers'. These act on the nervous system and can cause alertness, nervousness, anxiety, temporary paranoid psychosis, diminish fatigue and delay sleep.

**Depressants:** alcohol, solvents, aerosols, gases, benzodiazepines. These also act on the central nervous system relieving tension and anxiety. They can impair mental and physical functions and decrease self-control.

**Illegal Highs:** are psychoactive substances that mimic the effects of other illegal drugs. There's not enough known about many of these drugs to know about their effects or what happens when they're used with other substances.

**Analgesics:** pain killers, heroin, opium, pethidine, codeine. They reduce sensitivity to emotional reactions and physical pain. They can be physically and psychology addictive.

## Consequences and the law

If you get caught using illegal drugs you risk fines, a prison sentence and a criminal record. Possible university consequences may include disciplinary procedures and suspension from your course.

## Alcohol safety

The recommended maximum amount of alcohol per day is:

- **Women:** 2-3 units (14 units per week)
- **Men:** 3-4 units (21 units per week)

1 unit of alcohol can be found in:

- ½ pint of beer, lager or cider
- 1 single spirit
- 1 125ml glass of wine

## How to tell you have a problem

The first step in helping yourself or others is acknowledging the problem. People with drink or drug related problems may also be aware of the following:

- Inability to control drinking/drug taking
- Change in personality after use
- Concern shown by family and friends
- Using alcohol/drugs to escape problems
- Wanting to be 'escape' reality

## Where to get support

If you are concerned about your use, contact iPoint to book an appointment to speak with one of our Advisers. They will be able to listen and explore options to help you move forward. You can also contact the following agencies:

- Health Centre: 01484 430386
- Lifeline Kirklees: 01484 353333
- National Drugs Helpline: 0800 776600
- Kirklees Alcohol Advisory Service: 07966 306334

## Get help

**Self-help:** [www.bigwhitewall.co.uk](http://www.bigwhitewall.co.uk)

**In person:** Wellbeing and Disability Services, Level 4, Student Central.

**Email:** [studentwellbeing@hud.ac.uk](mailto:studentwellbeing@hud.ac.uk) **Tel:** 01484 471001 **Web:** [hud.ac/wds](http://hud.ac/wds)