Binge drinking means drinking heavily on a single occasion, or drinking continuously over a number of days or weeks. This type of drinking is seriously harmful to your health and in some cases of over-use, may even lead to death. Do not feel pressured to drink heavily when you go out to a bar, pub or at a special event like a birthday party.

Drinking too much on a single occasion means drinking more than the recommended level for adults (four (4) or more standard alcoholic drinks in one session)

Find out how a standard drink is measured (PDF)

Effects of binge drinking

Short term effects

In the short term you are likely to experience a number of physical effects, such as:

- Hangovers
- Nausea
- Shakiness
- Vomiting and memory loss
- Injury to yourself
- Alcohol poisoning

Long term effects

In the long term, binge drinking is likely to cause physical, emotional or social problems. These may include:

- Cirrhosis of the liver
- Cancer, especially of the mouth, pharynx, larynx, oesophagus, bowel (in men) and breast (in women)
- A range of diseases affecting the heart and blood, and including stroke and hypertension
- Problems with the nerves of the arms and legs
- Alcohol-related brain injury
- Alcohol dependence
- Harm to the unborn baby through mixing alcohol and pregnancy or alcohol and breastfeeding
- Poor diet
- Stomach problems
- Frequent infections
- Skin problems
- Reproduction issues, such as sexual impotence and a reduction in fertility
- Concentration and term memory problems
- Depression
- Family and relationship problems
- Poor work performance
- Legal and financial difficulties

For more information

You should follow the Australian Guidelines on drinking alcohol from the National Health and Medical Research Council