

## Healthy Living

### Alcohol

Drinking too much alcohol will raise your blood pressure over time. As alcohol contains a lot of calories, it can also cause you to gain weight which will in turn increase your blood pressure.

If you keep to the recommended limits for alcohol, this will help to keep your blood pressure down. The current recommendations are 21 units of alcohol a week for men, and 14 units a week for women.

#### How many units am I drinking?

Single measure of spirits (25ml) = 1 unit

Pint of beer (normal strength) = 2 units

Medium glass of wine (175ml) = 2 units

Large glass of wine (250ml) = 3 units

Pint of strong beer = 4 units

Even if you do not drink too much, there are huge benefits to drinking less alcohol. Here are some tips to help you drink less and still have a good night out (or in) without worrying about your blood pressure:

- ❖ **Try low alcohol options** – there are numerous lower strength beers and wines available to the market now.
- ❖ **Check the label** – the majority of drinks labels should tell you how many units they contain.
- ❖ **Make drinks last longer by adding mixers or water.**
- ❖ **Don't eat snacks like crisps or peanuts whilst drinking** – if you're tempted to head to the bar for a snack, then try not to as the added salt will only make you want to drink more and will raise your blood pressure.
- ❖ **Buy a drinks measure** – this is useful when you are drinking at home. It will help you keep track of how much you are drinking.