David Fairlamb
THE FIT FACTOR

Don't miss David's tips every Saturday in your Journal

ONE in five of us are risking our health by drinking too much alcohol, research by the Royal College of Psychiatrists showed.

The stress of the Covid-19 crisis, working from home and the financial fallout have been blamed for rocketing numbers turning to alcohol for comfort.

The number of people in the UK drinking high-risk levels of alcohol almost doubled during lockdown, 40% of middle-class England are now drinking too much, up from 28% in February before the pandemic began.

An estimated 8.4 million people drank high-risk amounts of alcohol in June, compared to 4.8 million four months earlier.

Of course drinking too much alcohol can lead to many other health problems such as strokes, heart disease and liver failure.

Whereas more immediate issues such as depression, will only mask the problem and, in many cases, make things worse.

It can also lower your immune system and with Covid still well and truly with us, it's hugely important to keep your body and mind as healthy as possible. If you are one of the many who have drunk more than your norm during the last few months, take a look at your intake and try to see how and where you can pull back.

Adults are advised to stay under 14 units a week – one unit is about half a pint of beer or a single measure of spirits, while a small glass of wine contains about 1.5 units of alcohol.

Here are some examples of 14 units, remember this is the advised limit for one week:

■ Seven pints of average-strength (4%) lager

■ Four and a half pints of higher-strength lager/beer/cider (568ml, ABV 5.2%)

■ Nine bottles of alcopop (275ml, ABV 5.5%)

■ Nine glasses of Champagne, prosecco, cava and other sparkling wine

Do what is right, not what is easy
Motivational quote of the day

■ Eight bottles of lager/beer/cider (330ml, ABV 5%)

■ Just over four 250ml glasses of average-strength (12%) wine

■ Seven 175ml glasses of average-strength (12%) wine

■ Just over nine 125ml glasses of average-strength (12%) wine

■ 14 single measures of spirits (ABV 37.5%)

To break this habit and have more alcohol-free days, try downloading the drink-free day app. This may help with motivation or also check the I'm Done Drinking app.

Be aware of what you are drinking – a pint of high-strength lager has around three units per drink. Try reaching for a lower strength pint.

Spacing your drinks by alternating a drink of water to slow down your consumption also works well.

Of course you can try all these various tips but, at the end of the day, having self-discipline to say no is the best way forward and feel good about it.

When you are in control of yourself and the situation, you can form stronger self-discipline and healthier habits.