

Let's Talk

The Liver and Alcohol

BINGE DRINKING

According to some definitions, a man who drinks three pints of Stella Artois or a woman who knocks back four Bacardi Breezers is binge drinking.

Binge drinking is drinking to get drunk. The amount of alcohol needed will vary enormously from person to person and from occasion to occasion. But typically, drinking more than 8 units for a man, or 6 units for a woman, in one session is regarded as binge drinking.

Working out how many units are in a drink has become harder over the years. In the 1980s, a pint of beer typically was the equivalent of 2 units of alcohol. Now some premium beers have more than 3 units in a pint. A pint of ordinary beer or lager has 2.3 units, a pint of strong lager such as Stella Artois

has 3 units, a 175 ml glass of wine more than 2 units, a large 250 ml glass 3 units, a small 25 ml measure of spirit 1 unit and a 275 ml bottle of alcopop 1.5 units.

That means a woman who knocks back four Bacardi Breezers will have consumed 6 units and could be three times over the drink drive limit. A man drinking three pints of Stella Artois will have consumed 9 units and, by most definitions, will be binge drinking.

Binge drinking is most common among 16 to 24-year-olds, and is more common among men than women. Studies have shown that those who drink a lot in their teens and early 20s are up to twice as likely, as light drinkers, to be binge drinking 25 years later.

