



Alcohol and your surgery

Increased bleeding

Alcohol can affect the blood in ways similar to blood thinning medication. If you drink alcohol before surgery, you may take longer to stop bleeding.



Interference with anaesthesia

Drinking alcohol during the weeks leading to your surgery increases your risk of serious complications, such as awareness and anaphylaxis



Delayed recovery

Drinking more than two drinks a day can have a direct impact on how quickly you recover from your surgery



Infection

Alcohol may cause your wound to heal slower than normal, increasing your risk of infection to the site of your surgery



Liver function

Alcohol consumption directly affects your liver and impacts on your body's ability to safely absorb medication and regulate blood clotting



Longer stay

Increased alcohol intake is associated with a longer stay in the hospital overall as well as an increased likelihood of ICU admission



Nil by mouth?

Alcohol can cause the stomach to delay emptying, increasing the risk of pulmonary aspiration.



Who do I speak to about alcohol?

You can speak with a member of your surgical team if you have any questions relating to alcohol intake before you attend your surgery.

Your surgery may be delayed or canceled if your alcohol use is assessed to be excessive. This is to help you manage your intake and optimise your health before surgery. The UK Chief Medical Officers advise that to keep the risk to health from alcohol low, adults should not regularly drink more than 14 units of alcohol per week.