



connect

wellbeing, ability, recovery

ALCOHOL - DOES ALCOHOL MAKE YOU ARGUE?

Whether you fancy an evening in with a takeaway and the telly, or a night out at a nice restaurant, a glass of wine can help you and your partner feel more relaxed and sociable. Drink too much however, and you could find your night ruined by a booze-fuelled barney that neither of you really want. Late-night disagreements may often be resolved in the morning, but they can grow into relationship-threatening resentments.

Why alcohol can encourage us to argue

Alcohol works on the brain to lower our inhibitions, which can be great news if you fancy some flirty behaviour with your partner. But those lower inhibitions can also make you accidentally let slip that you hate their new hairstyle, or find you flirting with that sexy bar worker between rounds. The flipside to the feel-good state that alcohol can create are the angry moods that may start to appear after you've drunk too much. Scientists have linked aggression to the consumption of too much alcohol – so it's not surprising that you're more likely to argue after drinking. Worryingly, they have also identified a strong link between alcohol and domestic violence.

How alcohol can exacerbate any problems in your relationship

Relate relationship counsellor Christine Northam says that arguing a lot when you're drunk could reveal underlying problems with your relationship. She believes that alcohol is often used as an excuse for bad behaviour. About a third of the couples Christine sees end up in counselling because one of them, or both, drink too much. "The younger couples I see work really hard in the week and then go ballistic at the weekend," says Christine, "and that can cause arguments. In the questionnaire people fill out before they see me, one of the questions is 'How much alcohol do you drink?' Often I'll ask people in counselling 'Do you drink much?' and they say 'No'. But looking at their survey results reveals otherwise."

The best time to talk with your partner

If alcohol is affecting your relationship, the next day or when you are both sober is the best time to talk. Author and behavioural expert Judi James, says that if you think your partner is drinking too much, it's important not to criticise them. "Instead you might want to say: 'Why don't we try to cut down together?' Then you can both motivate one another and will have a responsibility to each other," advises Judi. "Or you might want to ask your partner when they're sober, 'Shall I stop you when you've had too much to drink?'"

Five ways to stop alcohol ruining your relationship

- 1.) Go alcohol-free The best nights out, or evenings in, don't have to include booze. You can bond over a romantic movie or sip delicious alcohol-free cocktails at the bar.
- 2.) Stay within the government's lower risk guidelines If you do decide to drink alcohol try and stay within the government's guidelines.
- 3.) Snack smarter Food slows down the rate your body absorbs alcohol. So if you do choose to drink, eat regularly before and during drinking to help you stay sober.
- 4.) Talk it out sober If something is worrying you, don't wait until you've had too much to drink to talk about it. Instead, try and discuss any problems with your partner over a coffee.
- 5.) Choose the soft option Alternate soft drinks with alcohol to help stay in control of what you're drinking.





Discover more information on our website:

www.inspireconnect.info