

WHAT IS ALCOHOL?

Alcohol is a compound of carbon, hydrogen and oxygen, which is produced when glucose is fermented by yeast. The alcohol content of a particular drink is controlled by the amount of yeast and the duration of fermentation. Fruits are used to make wines and ciders, while cereals such as barley and rye form the basis of beers and spirits.

Alcohol is a high source of energy, providing seven calories per gram of alcohol. Therefore, if you're watching your waistline it might be an idea to cut down the amount you drink or alter the type of drink you choose.

Alcohol is a drug which has the immediate effect of altering mood. Because drinking makes people feel relaxed, happy and even euphoric, you may find it surprising to learn that alcohol is in fact a depressant. As such, it switches off the part of the brain that controls judgement, leading to loss of inhibitions. As most people are aware, alcohol also affects physical coordination.

The more alcohol consumed, the greater the effect - speech becomes slurred, vision blurred, balance is lost and movements are clumsy. Apart from cases of extreme intoxication, however, these effects are short-term. The liver breaks down and eliminates alcohol from the body, taking about an hour to deal with one unit.

YEAST: a type of fungus which is used in making alcoholic drinks such as beer and wine, and for making bread swell and become light (kvas)

FERMENT: to (cause something to) change chemically through the action of living substances, such as yeast or bacteria (vrenje)

SLUR: to pronounce the sounds of a word in a way which is unclear, uncontrolled or wrong

PHARYNX: the soft part at the top of the throat which connects the mouth and nose to the oesophagus and the larynx (**pharynx cancer**) /žrelo

OESOPHAGUS: the tube in the body which takes food from the mouth to the stomach (požiralnik)