



Guilty of drinking a little too much alcohol this year? Maybe it's time to 'Go Sober for October'

From time to time many of us are guilty of having a tiple too many. Apart from the occasional hangover the damage caused by alcohol often goes unnoticed. However, it's often our liver (not our heads!) that bear the brunt of the damage.

Drinking alcohol in excess can increase the risk of developing liver disease and cause irreparable damage. In fact, according to Drink Aware, alcohol is a major cause of the 25% increase in deaths from liver disease in England over the last decade.

In addition to giving your liver chance to detox, giving up booze for a month can also help you to lose a couple of pounds in weight and keep a couple more pounds in your pocket.

Here are our 3 top tips for going sober in October:

Pace yourself. Breaking up the month into smaller chunks helps you to not become overwhelmed by the challenge. Think about individual days or specific events that you need to get through and reward yourself for doing it (but not with a pint of beer or glass of red!)

Manage your stress levels. When we've had a long or stressful day it's easy to turn to alcohol as a way of relaxing. Aim to develop healthier alternatives as a coping mechanism to stress.

Remember why you're doing it. One won't hurt right? Whatever your motivation is, it's important to keep it top of mind to resist the urge to crack open a can or uncork a bottle.



Save the date –
Restart a heart day.

This day is to help raise awareness of cardiac arrest and teach CPR to as many people as possible in the UK to make sure they know how to save a life. [Click here](#) to learn more about restart a heart day and how you can get involved.

Top 5 Foods for healthy liver function

Grapefruit

Grapefruit contains antioxidants that naturally protect the liver. The two main antioxidants found in grapefruit are naringenin and naringin.

The protective effects of grapefruit are known to occur in two ways by reducing inflammation and protecting cells.

Studies have also shown that these antioxidants can reduce the development of hepatic fibrosis, a harmful condition in which excessive connective tissue builds up in the liver. This typically results from chronic inflammation.

Grapes

Grapes, especially red and purple grapes, contain a variety of beneficial plant compounds. The most famous one is resveratrol, which has a number of health benefits.

Many studies have shown that grapes and grape juice can benefit the liver. The benefits of grapes include; lowering inflammation, preventing damage and increasing antioxidant levels.

Cruciferous Vegetables

Cruciferous vegetables like brussels sprouts and broccoli are known for their high fibre content. They are also high in beneficial plant compounds.

A number of studies have shown brussels sprouts and broccoli sprout to increase levels of detoxification enzymes and protect the liver from damage.

A recent study in men with fatty liver found that broccoli sprout extract, which is high in beneficial plant compounds, improved liver enzyme levels and decreased oxidative stress.

Olive Oil

Olive oil is considered a healthy fat because of its many health benefits, including positive effects on heart and metabolic health in addition to liver health.

One study found that consuming one teaspoon (6.5 ml) of olive oil per day improved liver enzyme and fat levels. It also raised levels of a protein associated with positive metabolic effects. The participants also had less fat accumulation and better blood flow in the liver.

Several more recent studies have found similar effects of olive oil consumption in humans, including less fat accumulation in the liver, improved insulin sensitivity and improved blood levels of liver enzymes.

Fat accumulation in the liver is part of the first stage of liver disease. Therefore, olive oil's positive effects on liver fat, as well as other aspects of health, make it a valuable part of a healthy diet.

Blueberries & Cranberries

Blueberries and cranberries both contain anthocyanins, antioxidants that give berries their distinctive colours.

Several studies have demonstrated that whole cranberries and blueberries, as well as their extracts or juices, can help keep the liver healthy. Consuming these fruits for 3–4 weeks protected the liver from damage. Additionally, blueberries helped increase immune cell response and antioxidant enzymes

What's more, blueberry extract has even been shown to inhibit the growth of human liver cancer cells in test-tube studies. However, more studies are needed to determine if this effect can be replicated in the human body.

Making these berries a regular part of your diet is a good way to make sure your liver is supplied with the antioxidants it needs to stay healthy.

Fact of the month

Did you know that your heart pumps about 2,000 gallons of blood every day? Over a year that's more than an Olympic sized swimming pool!

Tip of the month

Eat your stress away. Prevent low blood sugar as it stresses you out. Eat regular and small healthy meals and keep fruit and veggies handy. Herbal teas will also soothe your frazzled nerves

"It is health that is real wealth, not pieces of silver and gold." – Mahatma Gandhi