

"If drinking is interfering with your work, you're probably a heavy drinker. If work is interfering with your drinking, you're probably an alcoholic"

-Unknown

In this month's newsletter:

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Fact & Tip of the month



Alcohol and relationships: a sobering thought

Alcohol awareness week is an annual awareness campaign ran by Alcohol Change UK and the theme for 2021 is 'Alcohol and relationships'.

The link between alcohol and relationship is strong, with many of us associating alcohol with socialising. Alcohol can become a big part of our connections and interactions with those around us, but when our own or a loved one's drinking starts to negatively affect our relationships or stands in the way of us taking actions on our own drinking, it can hugely impact our lives.

Research shows that many people have found themselves drinking more to deal with feelings of loneliness and isolation during the pandemic. Since leaving lockdown and beginning to return to normal life, you may be experiencing pressures to drink, begin drinking to cope with social anxiety and be putting pressure on yourself to get back to 'normal' socialising.



The facts and figures

In England, 40% of adults drink over the recommended 14 units per week and 27% of drinkers in Great Britain binge drink on their heaviest drinking days (over 8 units for men and over 6 units for women).

Binge drinking has a direct link with anti-social behaviour and violence. 39% of people in England and Wales in 2018/19 stated they witnessed any type of anti-social behaviour in their local area. 11% of this anti-social behaviour was alcohol related.

Data from the Alcohol Toolkit Study indicated one in five people in England were harmed by others drinking in 2018/19.



Alcohol and the workplace

Our relationships don't just include our personal lives, but our working lives as well.

You may not think that alcohol and the workplace have much of a link, but did you know that lost productivity due to alcohol use costs the UK economy more than £7 billion each year? People may attend work hungover, or still under the influence from the night before, consume alcohol before work or during the day; or their work may be affected by health problems resulting from drinking. Alcohol Change UK share a few examples:

- 40% of employers mention alcohol as a significant cause of low productivity
- Between 3% and 5% of all work absence is caused by alcohol consumption
- 35% of people say they've noticed colleagues under the influence of drugs and alcohol at work
- 25% say that drugs or alcohol have affected them at work, with 23% saying they had experienced decreased productivity as a result

However, workplaces don't just suffer from the effects of alcohol but can sometimes heighten the problem. 27% of people say that workplace stress makes them drink more.

Many workplace cultures also encourage drinking, whether through informal socialising or workplace events where drinking is considered the norm and alcohol is often made available for free.

What can you do to raise awareness around this subject in the workplace?

First things first, think about your company-wide events. You can't stop staff drinking socially out of working hours but if you are hosting team events, you could encourage organisers to consider alcohol free activities and dinners as opposed to parties.

Secondly, you could implement a wellbeing strategy that allows employees to assess their lifestyle choices. Our digital platform, MyWellbeingCheck, covers seven wellbeing topics including alcohol. Based on the outcome of their report, MyWellbeingCheck will provide employees with areas that they could make some positive changes and tips on how to do so.

Lastly, take advantage of awareness campaigns. By encouraging employees to speak about this topic at a time where it is being spoken about nationally will help them to feel less 'put out' by opening up about their relationship with alcohol. Alcohol Change UK have a article on their website about how you can implement an awareness campaign within your workplace and you can access it [HERE](#).

Click [HERE](#) to find out more about **my**wellbeingcheck® from Healthy Performance.

Tips to Promote Prostate Cancer Awareness in the Workplace

Did you know that prostate cancer is the most common form of cancer to affect males in the UK?

According to Cancer Research UK, over 48,000 men are diagnosed with prostate cancer each year and Prostate Cancer UK state that 1 in 8 men will be diagnosed in their lifetime.

But why should you raise awareness within the workplace?

Well, with the state pension age currently sitting at 66, but rising to 67 by 2028, it is likely that some of your workforce could be affected by prostate cancer.

What are the risk factors?

Prostate cancer most commonly affects men over 75, however, men who are black and men with a family history are two and a half times more likely to get prostate cancer. Research also suggests that obesity increases the risk.

It is recommended that black men, and those with a family history, should consult with their doctor about a PSA test when they reach 45 years of age. All other men should be having this conversation at 50.

What are the symptoms?

It's important that men are aware of the possible warning signs of prostate cancer. **These can include:**

- Frequent urination
- Weak or interrupted urine flow, or the need to strain to empty the bladder
- The urge to urinate frequently at night
- Blood in the urine
- Blood in the seminal fluid
- Discomfort or pain when sitting



How to get tested for prostate cancer

There's no single test for prostate cancer however, the most used tests are:

- Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) test
- Digital Rectal Examination (DRE)
- Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) scan

At Healthy Performance we support hundreds of businesses with their wellbeing strategy through our range of health and wellbeing services, including PSA testing. Our PSA tests are available to those aged 40 or over within our onsite employee health assessments and are quick, easy, and painless for the participant.

The process involves one of our trained healthcare professionals simply taking a blood sample from the fingertip of an employee, and then sending the blood sample to our laboratory. The results are then provided within two weeks but often much quicker than this.

We began carrying out Onsite Health Assessments at Thames Water in 2013 and have saved the lives of 13 employees with the early detection of prostate cancer.



Promoting Prostate Cancer Awareness in the Workplace

Raising awareness is all about starting conversation.

By starting this conversation, you could be encouraging your employees to get themselves checked, or even getting them to speak to their friends and families about their potential risk.

We encourage all workplaces to discuss Prostate Cancer, amongst many other health concerns with their employees and we've put together some of our top tips in promoting them in the workplace.

- Utilise awareness months: there are two national focuses on men's health each year with 'March for Men' (organised by Prostate Cancer UK) taking place in March and Movember taking place annual in November. Use these campaigns as ice breakers to get the subject being discussed amongst employees and by using a national campaign, employees often feel like they are part of a bigger movement. You can often find free resources on these campaign websites to help with your workplace promotion also.

- To raise awareness all year round, you can use free resources from the charity Prostate Cancer UK. Request leaflets on diet and lifestyle, or guides to common prostate problems and place these in staffrooms, canteens or on notice boards around the workplace. To go one step further, you can organise an awareness talk with Prostate Cancer UK where a trained volunteer will come along and give a talk directly to your team.

- Ensure full utilisation of your internal communications channels. You can rotate free resources from Prostate Cancer UK, or the Healthy Performance Take 5 library in an email or monthly newsletter to remind employees of the symptoms and the importance of getting themselves checked.

To find out more about PSA testing from Healthy Performance, click [HERE](#).

Tip of the month

Including tomatoes and oily fish more frequently in your diet may reduce your risks of developing prostate cancer.

Fact of the month

Prostate cancer survival rates in the UK have tripled in the last 40 years, from **25% to 84%.**

