

Alcohol

- ❑ Alcohol can lead to dehydration, so avoid alcohol before exercise, including the evening before competitions! Some events do not allow the consumption of alcohol e.g. archery, motorcycling. Check the up to date prohibited list on www.wada-ama.org for details of sports in which alcohol is not allowed.

What are the other effects of alcohol?

- Increases the production of urine
- Impairs heat regulation
- Slows your reaction time and affects your co-ordination and balance, and may have a detrimental effect on performance
- Increases your risk of injury
- Provides additional calories, which may lead to weight gain

Guidelines for sensible intake of alcohol

- ❑ Rehydrate and refuel as a first priority after intense exercise. High alcohol drinks (greater than 4%) are not ideal rehydration beverages; nor do they contain significant amounts of carbohydrate.
- ❑ If muscle damage or injury occurs during exercise, it is recommended that you avoid alcohol for 24 - 36 hours, as alcohol may impair the recovery or repair processes.
- ❑ Alcohol may increase heat loss in cold environments. Take care to stay warm in such conditions.
- ❑ Once fluid and carbohydrate needs have been met, alcohol may be consumed in moderation.
- ❑ When you drink, keep within the safe intakes, i.e. no more than 2 - 3 units a day for women and no more than 3 - 4 units a day for men and have two alcohol free days a week.

How much is 1 unit?

- ❑ 1 unit is equivalent to 8g or 10 ml of pure alcohol. Each gram of alcohol provides 7kcal, which can add up if you are trying to lose weight! Each of the following contains approximately 1 unit of alcohol:
 - Half a pint of standard strength (3 - 4% alcohol by volume, ABV) beer, lager or cider
 - A 25 ml pub measure of spirit
 - A small glass of sherry or port
 - Less than half a 175 ml glass of 13% ABV wine (wines stronger than 8% will contain more than 1 unit per small glass)
 - Remember, alcopops e.g. Bacardi Breezer[®], Reef[®], premium lager e.g. Pils lager[®], Grolsch[®] and many wines are often stronger in alcohol and therefore will provide more than 1 unit per measure (...and more calories!).

This information is taken from 'Fuel for Performance, Nutrition for Sport', a sports nutrition resource updated and revised by the following Welsh sports dietitians:

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