

Effects on Alcohol



Drinking and Driving

In Britain, alcohol-related road accidents are the commonest cause of death in young men. People who drink and drive are not only being stupid with their own lives, they are selfishly endangering others. Passengers or pedestrians may also be killed or crippled for life.

There is no excuse for drinking and driving. Government advertising hammers the message home – 'save lives, don't drink and drive'.

With a little planning, everyone can avoid mixing alcohol and driving. Friends can club together to take a taxi. Or they can take it in turns to have a night off. They might even find that they enjoy themselves just as much.

It is against the law to drive with more than a certain level of alcohol in the blood. People who do are said to be 'over the limit'. The limit is very low, and even one drink can put you over.

The same rules apply to bicycling and swimming – 'don't do it after drinking'.

The Breathalyser

After you have had an alcoholic drink, there is alcohol on your breath, and in your blood and urine. In most countries it is illegal to drive a motor vehicle with more than a certain amount of alcohol in the bloodstream. Police often use a breathalyser to measure the alcohol in the

breath and to check if a driver is over the limit. If so, the driver is usually taken to a police station for a more accurate test to be made on urine or blood.

Consequences

Being drunk is no excuse for committing a crime. In fact drunkenness itself is generally against the law. Courts have little sympathy with people who fight, steal or cause damage while under the influence of alcohol. Violent hooligans receive severe punishments. Under-age drinking often leads to an unpleasant encounter with the police. Getting a criminal record is not a sensible way to start life. People who are caught drinking and driving usually lose their driving licence. This can badly affect people's lives. Some people could lose their jobs if this happened.

Statistics

Many car accidents are related to drinking, which is why there are laws about drinking and driving. Many offenders are young people.

US: 17 per cent of all drink and drive offences due to 18-20 year-olds

UK: 33 per cent of all drink and drive offenders are under 25