

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

Introduction

In a high-risk industry like Construction, drugs and alcohol and work, are not compatible. If you are believed to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, Site Management may request testing to be undertaken or ask you to leave site. Random sampling may also be undertaken without notice.

If you do drink excessive amounts of alcohol or take drugs during an evening, or at the weekend, you may not be fit to work the following morning.

If you feel somebody is not fit for work because of alcohol or drugs, inform your supervisor or site management, because they are a danger to themselves and possibly more importantly, everybody else.

Alcohol

Daily allowance

Drinking below the following recommended drinking limits will reduce your risk of suffering from alcohol related conditions such as cirrhosis of the liver:



At least two days a week should be alcohol free.

Counting Units

On average, it takes one hour for your body to eliminate one unit of alcohol. Units are a way of telling you how much alcohol is in different drinks.



Drink Driving

Due to the amount of time alcohol takes to pass through the body, there is a risk that people who would not dream of driving after drinking may still be unwittingly over the drink drive limit the morning after.

The legal alcohol limit for drivers in England, Wales and Northern Ireland is:

- ❖ 35 microgrammes of alcohol per 100 millilitres of breath
- ❖ 80 milligrammes of alcohol in 100 millilitres of blood
- ❖ 107 milligrammes of alcohol per 100 millilitres of urine

The legal alcohol limit for drivers in Scotland and Ireland is:

- ❖ 22 microgrammes of alcohol per 100 millilitres of breath
- ❖ 50 milligrammes of alcohol in 100 millilitres of blood
- ❖ 67 milligrammes of alcohol per 100 millilitres of urine

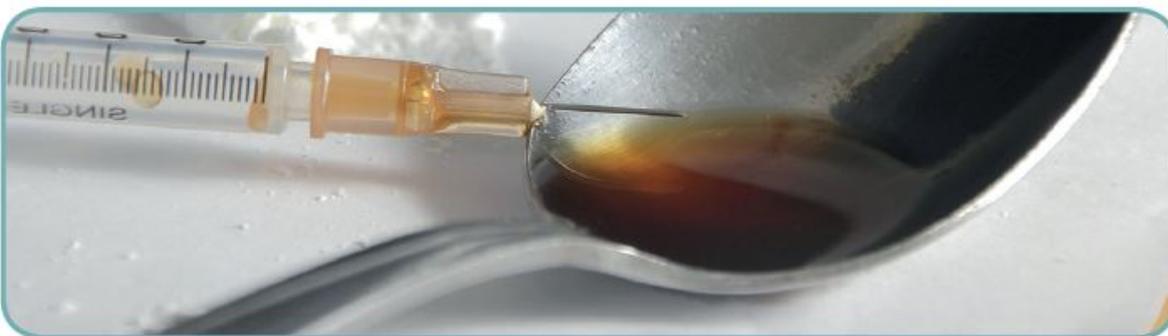
Drugs

Psychoactive drugs have an effect on your mind and carry the risk of impairment and dependency. The main drugs used in the UK are cannabis, cocaine, ecstasy and amphetamine

The three groups of drugs



Stimulants: (Cocaine, amphetamine and ecstasy) speed up the body and brain functions, creating hyperactivity and over-confidence. The body has to take time to recover after use.



Depressants: (Heroin, painkillers, sleeping tablets and cannabis) slow down the central nervous system, slowing reaction times and causing clumsiness.



Hallucinogenic: (LSD and magic mushrooms) distort reality, e.g. seeing sounds and hearing colours, and there is the danger of unexpected flashbacks.

Medicines

Some medicines, both prescription and over-the-counter, can have side effects which may affect your ability to work. Always check with your doctor or pharmacist when medicines are issued and let them know what your work involves.

Frequently Asked Questions

How will we be tested for drugs?

Drug testing is a three stage process – the specimen has to be collected, analysed and if the result is ‘non-negative’ this has to be interpreted correctly. The collection stage is designed to ensure that no-one can accuse you of trying to ‘cheat’ the process. You will be asked to declare any recent medication, which will be recorded and taken into consideration for any positive result. Once collected, the specimen is split by pouring into two separate containers, sealed in your presence and sent to the laboratory. Both containers are transferred to the laboratory but only one is opened for analysis, while the second is available for independent analysis. You have to give your consent for your second specimen to be analysed.

What about testing for alcohol?

Breath tests will be used for alcohol – a positive result will only be recorded if two consecutive samples give a result at or above the Group’s designated cut-off level.

What is a positive drug test result?

A positive drug test result is a confirmed laboratory positive result following a screening test.

What is Chain of Custody?

The procedures followed maintain the Chain of Custody of the sample, which is the system of controls that proves that the result reported relates to the sample provided by a particular individual. The specimens and paperwork are linked by a barcode identifier unique to each individual donor.

What happens to the second sample?

The second sample is held in protected, secure storage for up to one year. If the donor wants to challenge the result then Alere Toxicology will transfer the sample to a chosen laboratory, following Chain of Custody procedures.

How are samples disposed of?

The barcode identifier is used to track the sample throughout the laboratory and the laboratory computer system triggers notification when the storage period is up. The samples are identified by barcode scanner and are disposed of as clinical waste by a specialist waste disposal service.

Signs of Alcohol and Substance Misuse

The following symptoms may be caused by an alcohol or substance misuse problem that needs to be addressed before the problem becomes critical. Some may also be caused by medical conditions such as stress.

- ❖ Spending money on drugs or alcohol, leaving bills unpaid
- ❖ Getting into debt or stealing to support the habit
- ❖ Using drugs or alcohol at work
- ❖ Performance problems at work such as poor concentration, absence or decreased efficiency
- ❖ Family arguments, leading to verbal or physical abuse, extra-marital affairs, separation or divorce
- ❖ Children who no longer respect you, or are afraid of you
- ❖ Sexual problems
- ❖ Social problems such as loss of friends, isolation or loss of interest in sports or hobbies
- ❖ Loss of appetite
- ❖ Emotional symptoms such as low self-esteem, self-loathing, depression or suicidal thoughts
- ❖ Psychological symptoms such as anxiety or paranoia
- ❖ Physical symptoms such as shaking, sweating, stomach and gastric problems, pins and needles in hands and feet.

If you think you or a person you know has an alcohol or substance misuse problem, please seek help immediately.

Where to go for help

If you have any concerns, please seek help from your GP, or speak to your line manager or a human resources team, who will deal with any queries or issues in the strictest confidence

Further help and advice:

FRANK	0300 123 6600
Alcoholics Anonymous	0800 917 7650
Samaritans	0845 790 9090
Release	020 7324 2989
Your GP	