

Alcohol and Drug Snapshot

January 2025



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Drugs can slow down your responses, making it more likely that you'll have a collision on the road. This can lead to severe injuries and even death.

It's illegal to drive if either:

- you're unfit to do so because you're on legal or illegal drugs
- you have certain levels of illegal drugs in your blood (even if they have not affected your driving)

Police in Scotland now carry drug testing kits and are able to carry out immediate roadside 'field impairment assessment' for any driver they suspect of drug driving. This is a series of tests, for example asking you to walk in a straight line. They can also use a roadside drug kit to screen for cannabis and cocaine.

50% of Scottish drivers failed drug tests after being stopped by police

[Source](#)

If you're caught and convicted of drug driving, here's what you can expect to face as a minimum:

- 12 months driving ban
- Points on your licence
- Up to 6 months in prison
- An unlimited fine
- A criminal record
- The maximum penalty for causing death by careless driving under the influence of drugs is life imprisonment

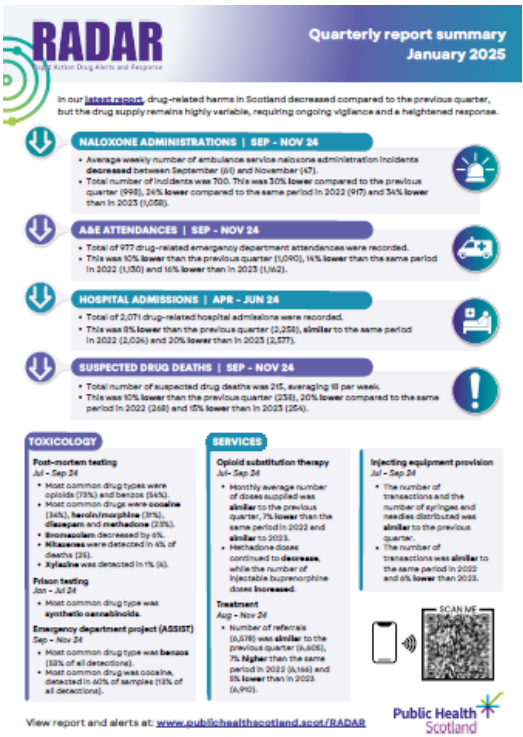
[Source](#)

Campaign Information

Police Scotland have created a drug driving campaign that includes many resources that can be downloaded and shared on social channels.



RADAR - Quarterly Report January 2025



The latest RADAR Quarterly Report was published on 28 January 2025. This report is to monitor drug-related harms, service usage and toxicology data, in order to provide an early warning of emerging drug trends and identify actions to reduce and prevent drug harms and deaths. The report can be accessed via the [Public Health Scotland website](#) or any of the social media channels below.



Dry January

Dry January* is a campaign delivered by Alcohol Change UK where people sign up to 31 alcohol free days for the month of January. The two studies below highlight both the effects of participating in Dry January (1) on wellbeing and the impact of short term abstinence (2).



This study examined the effects of participating in 'Dry January' on well-being and general self-efficacy (GSE) among 4232 adults.

Key findings from the study include:

- 1.Increased Well-being and GSE:** Participation in Dry January led to improvements in well-being and general self-efficacy (GSE), with larger gains for those who completed the challenge.
- 2.Role of Support:** Greater use of email support was significantly associated with successfully completing Dry January.
- 3.Physiological Benefits:** Abstaining from alcohol for a month resulted in lower liver fat, blood glucose, and cholesterol levels, as well as improved sleep quality, concentration, and work performance.
- 4.Long-term Impact:** Participation in Dry January was linked to longer-term reductions in alcohol intake and increased drink-refusal self-efficacy (DRSE).



This study assessed the impact of short-term alcohol abstinence on metabolic risk factors and cancer-related growth factors in moderate drinkers

Key Findings

- 1.Insulin Resistance:** Significant reduction in HOMA score by 25.9% in the abstinence group.
- 2.Blood Pressure:** Systolic and diastolic blood pressure decreased by 6.6% and 6.3%, respectively.
- 3.Weight:** Participants in the abstinence group experienced a 1.5% reduction in weight.
- 4.Cancer-related Growth Factors:** VEGF and EGF levels decreased by 41.8% and 73.9%, respectively.
- 5.Liver Function:** Improvements in liver function tests, including reductions in ALT and gamma GT levels.
- 6.Long-term Impact:** Sustained reduction in alcohol consumption and AUDIT scores at 6-8 months follow-up.

*The term "Dry January" is a registered trademark with Alcohol Change UK and was first registered in 2014.

Public Health Scotland Alcohol Harm Prevention Bulletin



This bulletin highlights publications and journal articles about alcohol harm prevention over the previous month.

You can also receive future issues by contacting phs.knowledge@phs.scot to be added to the distribution list.

If you have any questions about the bulletin, please contact PHS Knowledge Services on phs.knowledge@phs.scot. For any other alcohol related queries please contact the PHS Preventing Alcohol Harms Team on phs.alcoholprogramme@phs.scot.

Websites and Services



Alcohol and Recovery Drug Services (ADRS) provides a range of treatment and care options for individuals who are affected by their own or someone else’s alcohol and/or drug use.



NHS Inform host a directory of health and wellbeing services in Scotland. Including GP practices and support groups.