EPILEPSY NEW ZEALAND
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Alcohol



People with epilepsy often ask whether it is safe for them to drink alcohol. It's generally thought that alcohol and anti seizure medication (ASMs) also known as anti-epileptic drugs (AEDs) don't mix well together. ASMs and alcohol interact in specific ways, and the associated risks of combining the two should be considered if you live with epilepsy.

ASMs can make you more sensitive to the sedating effects of alcohol, leading you to feel drowsy or feel intoxicated more easily. Mixing ASMs and alcohol can also reduce the effectiveness of medication and/or increase side effects by affecting how the ASMs are metabolised, increasing the risk of seizure activity. The interaction of alcohol and ASMs makes driving more hazardous, even if you have consumed an amount within the legal limit, so you should avoid driving in these circumstances.

Excessive drinking, and activities associated with it, is of particular concern. This type of drinking can lead to missed medication, late nights, sleep deprivation and missed meals; all of which can lower your seizure threshold and trigger seizures.

If you have any concerns about drinking alcohol it's a good idea to ask your doctor, that way you can learn more about how drinking may affect your ASMs or particular type of epilepsy.

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