

# Alcohol and Drugs



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Understanding the effects of using alcohol and drugs after brain injury.

# Effects of alcohol and drugs after brain injury

After brain injury, your brain is more vulnerable to the effects of alcohol and drugs, therefore you are advised to abstain.

- Alcohol and drugs will affect you faster and have more of an impact on you after a brain injury
- The use of alcohol and recreational drugs will interfere with recovery
- Using alcohol or taking non-prescription drugs can increase the risk of having an epileptic seizure
- Any difficulties you may have as a result of your brain injury, may be made worse or become more obvious to other people when you drink alcohol or take drugs
- Alcohol and drugs can slow down the recovery period and can make you more prone to a second injury
- Alcohol and drugs can intensify problems with walking and talking caused by your brain injury
- Alcohol and drugs interfere with your ability to think and learn new things
- Alcohol and drugs can interfere with prescribed medications e.g. antiseizure medication
- Alcohol is a depressant
- Alcohol and drugs affect the frontal lobes impairing thinking, concentration, attention, memory and decision making

Therefore it is in your best interest to:

- Not drink alcohol or take non-prescription drugs or recreational drugs until you have fully recovered from your brain injury
- Limit or avoid alcohol even if your family and friends drink
- Have a routine and keep busy so you don't drink out of boredom
- Avoid all alcohol and drugs

If you feel like you have a problem with drinking or drug taking, seek help from a counsellor or doctor.

By drinking alcohol or using other drugs after a brain injury you are more likely to have another injury with more severe consequences.

With each brain injury it takes less force to cause greater harm.

## For further information

Some of the other leaflets in this series may help or you can contact your local Brain Injury Association, ACC, Ministry of Health or Disability Resource Information Centres.

For more information go to:  
[www.brain-injury.org.nz](http://www.brain-injury.org.nz)

## My important contacts:

Brain Injury Association:

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Case Manager:

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Doctor:

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Other contacts:

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