

MEDIA RELEASE

Immediate release

**CALLS TO AVOID DRINK DRIVING AS
SURGEONS REPORT RISE IN TRAUMA PRESENTATIONS**

The [Alcohol and Drug Foundation](#) is urging Australians to avoid drink driving, amid reports of a 'concerning' number of alcohol-related hospitalisations during the Coronavirus pandemic.

[The Royal Australasian College of Surgeons](#) (RACS) says preventable drink driving cases have contributed to a recent spike in trauma-presentations.

Chief Executive Officer, Dr Erin Lalor AM, backed calls by The Royal Australasian College of Surgeons to look out for each other and avoid risky behaviours such as driving under the influence of alcohol.

"The Alcohol and Drug Foundation is urging people to take steps to maintain their physical and mental health during this uncertain time, including reducing the risk of alcohol-related harms," Dr Lalor explained.

"If you are consuming alcohol, the safest option is to avoid getting behind the wheel. Alcohol can significantly impact on a person's driving because it can cause drowsiness, impaired vision, and reduced concentration and reaction times. It can also lead to overconfidence and risk taking."

"A reduction in alcohol related accidents will also take pressure off hospital resources needed for coronavirus presentations," Dr Lalor added.

Other tips to reduce the risk of alcohol-related harms include:

- Stick to the national guidelines. The National Health and Medical Research Centre recommends drinking no more than four standard drinks on a single occasion to avoid injury or illness, and no more than two standard drinks on any day to reduce the lifetime risk of alcohol-related injury and disease such as cancer.
- Don't mix alcohol with other drugs, including medications.
- Avoid using alcohol as a mechanism to relieve stress and/or anxiety, as alcohol can heighten these feelings. Try alternative tactics such as listening to music, exercising, reading and connecting with loved ones. If you are still feeling stressed or anxious, seek advice from a health professional.
- Model responsible drinking around children, including limiting consumption, avoiding intoxication, not drinking and driving, and showing you can deal with stress in healthier ways.

The Alcohol and Drug Foundation is strongly committed to supporting all Australians with quality information to prevent and reduce alcohol-related harm.

For free and confidential drug information or support, we encourage people to visit www.adf.org.au or call the Alcohol and Drug Foundation's DrugInfo line on 1300 85 85 84. The non-judgmental service provides the facts about alcohol and other drugs, advice on how to support loved ones, and connects people with relevant health and support services in their state and territory.

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For media enquiries please call the Alcohol and Drug Foundation's media team on 0430 948 380 or email media@adf.org.au

About the Alcohol and Drug Foundation: Celebrating 60 years of service to the community, the Alcohol and Drug Foundation is one of Australia's leading bodies committed to preventing and minimising alcohol and other drug harms in communities around the nation. The Foundation reaches millions of Australians in local

communities through sporting clubs, workplaces, health care settings and schools, offering educational information, drug and alcohol prevention programs and advocating for strong and healthy communities.

The Power of Words: There's power in the language we use to talk about alcohol and other drugs, and people who use alcohol and other drugs. Stigmatising language can negatively impact on a person's health, wellbeing and relationships. Using person-centric language, instead of focusing on an individual's substance use, has the power to reduce stigma and improve health and social outcomes. For a guide to using non-stigmatising language, please see the [Power of Words](#) or the [Mindframe Guidelines](#).