

- Refuge Women's Advice Line:
0808 2000 247
- Relate Relationship Support:
0300 0030 396
- Respect Men's Advice Line:
0808 801 0327
- Samaritans:
116 123 or **0330 094 5717**
- STARS (Sexual Trauma and Recovery Service)

To read this leaflet in a different language, please visit our website:
www.uhd.nhs.uk/visit/patient-information-leaflets and use the language
and accessibility function available along the top of the site.

To ask for this leaflet in larger print, please contact the patient experience team
on **0300 019 8499** or email **uhd.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net**.

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Some of our hospital services are moving.
Visit **www.uhd.nhs.uk/future** to find out more.

A guide to having an outpatient alcohol detoxification (detox) at home

Patient information

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What is an outpatient detox?

An outpatient detox means you can stay at home while stopping alcohol safely. Being at home allows you to stay in familiar surroundings.

You will need to visit the hospital every day to see a specialist addiction nurse. Appointments usually last 30 to 60 minutes.

Please allow extra time for parking or public transport.

Alcohol withdrawal symptoms.

Before your detox starts, the specialist addiction nurse will explain the process and answer any questions you have.

Common withdrawal symptoms include:

- shaking
- headaches
- feeling sick
- sweating

Useful phone numbers

Community alcohol services

- With You (BCP):
01202 558 855
- Reach (Dorset):
0800 043 4656
- Inclusion:
0300 124 0103

Other support services

- Alcoholics Anonymous (AA):
0800 917 7650
- Andy's Man Club
- Connections Dorset:
0800 652 0190
(or **111** for 24/7 mental health support)
- Cruse Bereavement Care:
0808 8081 677
- Debt Helpline:
0808 8084 000
- Drinkline:
0300 123 1110
- Paragon Dorset (Domestic Abuse Support):
0800 032 5204

Advice during detox

Do not:

- go to work
- drive
- use machinery

Detox medication can affect your judgement and concentration. These effects may last for up to seven days after your final dose.

Detox can be physically and emotionally challenging. The following tips may help:

- contact your GP
- Remove any alcohol from your home.
- Eat healthy meals with fruit, vegetables, whole grains, and lean protein.
- Drink plenty of fluids, such as water, milk, hot drinks, and juice.

Cravings

You may have cravings or strong urges to drink alcohol.

Distractions can help, such as:

- playing board games
- watching television
- attending all talking therapy sessions.

Medication may also help with cravings. Speak to your specialist addiction nurse about this. Medication should be used alongside talking therapies, not instead of them.

Thiamine (vitamin B1)

Thiamine helps your body turn food into energy.

Foods that contain thiamine include:

- pork
- whole grains
- fish
- sunflower seeds

A lack of thiamine can sometimes cause alcohol-related brain damage.

You may be prescribed a thiamine supplement to help protect your health.

Do not stop taking thiamine unless you have spoken to the specialist addiction nurse or GP.

On the day your detox begins, the specialist addiction nurse will give you a type of medicine known as benzodiazepine. This medicine slows down activity in your brain and nervous system. It helps you feel calmer and more relaxed. This is to help make withdrawals more comfortable. You can collect the detox medication from the hospital pharmacy. It may take some time for your medication to be prepared. You can also arrange with the specialist addiction nurse to collect it from your local pharmacy.

A detox usually lasts 7 to 10 days.

Withdrawal symptoms are often strongest on the second day of detox.

In some cases, people can have withdrawal seizures. For this reason, it is important to have someone with you who can call **999** if needed.

The Addiction Care and Treatment Service (ACTS) can be contacted on **0300 019 2871** (Do NOT use this number in an emergency).

ACTS hours: **8am to 4pm**

If you are worried after hours:

- contact your GP
- call **111**
- or in an emergency, call **999**