

## Where can I get more support?

Research shows that detoxes without ongoing support afterwards are rarely successful in helping people remain dry. Without support people often relapse back into heavy drinking but with support the likelihood of relapse is greatly reduced. The following groups may be able to offer you support.

### **ARA (Addiction Recovery Agency) / Alcohol Misuse Service**

Telephone: **0117 929 3028**

Offers free and confidential service for drinkers and their families, assessment, counselling, relapse prevention, groups, options Day Care Service, drop-in, a dry house, literature and information. You can refer yourself to this service.

### **AA (Alcoholics Anonymous)**

Telephone: **0117 926 5520**

A self-help group offering regular meetings all over the Bristol area (as well as elsewhere) and a telephone help-line.

### **Samaritans**

Telephone: **0117 983 1000**

A 24 hour crisis help-line

Please ask your key worker for a more detailed list of support organisations.

**You should not drive a vehicle during your detox.** You will already have been given advice about driving and your responsibility regarding the DVLA. The medication may make you drowsy and unwell which can impair your ability to drive.

## Contact us

Alcohol Team  
1 Colston Fort, Montague Place  
Kingsdown, Bristol, BS6 5UB  
Tel: 0117 919 2345  
Fax: 0117 924 8814  
Website: [www.avon.nhs.uk/alcohol](http://www.avon.nhs.uk/alcohol)

[www.awp.nhs.uk](http://www.awp.nhs.uk)

To make a comment or suggestion, raise a concern or make a complaint, please contact the Trust's Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

Tel: **01249 468261**  
Freephone: **0800 073 1778**  
Email [pals@awp.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@awp.nhs.uk)

**This information can be made available in other formats (for example, Braille) or languages on request by calling the PALS number.**

Lead: Service Manager  
Leaflet Code: AWP2010-109  
Approval Date: May 2010  
Review Date: May 2013

## Alcohol Pre-detox

### Information for clients preparing for detoxification

### Bristol Specialist Drug and Alcohol Service (BSDAS)

If you are considering a detoxification from alcohol this leaflet explains the process.

BSDAS upholds the Service User Charter, a copy of which is displayed in reception areas, and is available upon request.

## What is a detoxification?

Detox (short for detoxification) is a process which is designed to reduce symptoms of alcohol withdrawal (most commonly, shakes, sweats, feeling sick and retching) with the help of medication. This is prescribed and monitored by the alcohol team at Colston Fort.

## What medication is used?

The main drug we use is called chlordiazepoxide (Librium), a minor tranquilliser similar to diazepam (Valium). It is a safe medication and does not cause addiction problems when used short-term. It is gradually reduced daily over the duration of the detox. For a list of other medications used during a detox, see the leaflet 'A guide to home detox'.

## How long does a detox take?

Usually seven days but in some cases up to 10 days.

## How often should I attend for detox?

All detoxes start on Monday mornings. Your first appointment will be with one of our doctors who will assess your suitability for detox and prescribe medication, if appropriate. The appointment usually takes about 30 minutes.

You will be given 24 hours supply of tablets and will need to attend Colston Fort each day for the remainder of the week. You will be seen by one of our nurses daily who will review how the detox is going and dispense your medication. Daily medication is usually dispensed between 11.30am and 12.15pm.

You will be given sufficient medication on the Friday to cover you for the weekend. You will have a follow-up appointment with the doctor again on the following Monday/Tuesday.

## What if I drink during detox?

Detox aims to reduce any unpleasant withdrawal symptoms that you may experience which may have led you to drink alcohol in the past. If you drink alcohol during the detox you are defeating the purpose of the detox which is to enable you to stop drinking with the least discomfort.

## It is also unsafe to mix alcohol with this medication.

If you have drunk any alcohol during the detox then we need to know and it's likely that the detox will be stopped.

We routinely breathalyse people to ensure that the detox is going to plan.

## How should I prepare for a detox?

- **Entry Group**  
As part of your alcohol treatment programme you may find it helpful to attend the Entry Group at Colston Fort to help you prepare for your detox and for living without drinking alcohol. This is held every Thursday from 10:30am until 12:00 noon. As this is part of the preparation stage, it is understood that you may have had a drink to enable you to get to the meeting. Please do not attend if intoxicated, that is if the alcohol is interfering with your functioning.
- **Pre-detox assessment**  
Before you are invited to participate you will be asked to attend a pre-detox clinic to assess how best to proceed with your detox and formulate a detox plan.

## What else should I do during detox?

It is best that you do not detox alone and that you should have a support network in place. Usually family or friends are best able to provide this. You should also try to avoid stressful situations, eat regularly and drink plenty of non-alcoholic beverages. Further information about this is available in our leaflet 'A guide to home detox'.