

PHENYLKETONURIA

(PKU)

ADVICE ABOUT ALCOHOL FOR PEOPLE WITH PHENYLKETONURIA

The following information can be used as a guide to the protein content of alcoholic drinks. Please consult your dietitian and/or doctor about alcohol before using this information as individual treatment varies and you should follow the advice of your own medical advisors. We would advise that women should not take alcohol during their pregnancy.

National guidelines for alcohol are as follows:

Women no more than 14 units per week. Men no more than 21 units per week.

One unit is half a pint of beer or 100mls of wine or 25ml spirit.

Aspartame in drinks, including alcoholic drinks

The law requires that all drinks containing aspartame must be labelled with the words 'contains a source of phenylalanine'.

However, drinks with an alcohol content of more than 1.2% are exempt from carrying an ingredient list.

So, if you see 'contains a source of phenylalanine' on the label there is aspartame in that drink.

Drinks containing only a trace of protein

The following alcoholic drinks can be drunk without counting them as phenylalanine exchanges in the diet.

CIDER

Dry, sweet and vintage cider N.B. Some ciders may be sweetened with artificial sweetener but this would NOT be aspartame. Aspartame is not a suitable sweetener for use with cider.

LIQUEUR'S

Cherry Brandy and Curacao.

MARTINI

Dry and sweet.

FORTIFIED WINES

Port, sherry and Madeira.

SPIRITS

Whisky, gin, rum, brandy, vodka, Pimms. N.B. Take care that any mixers (either bottled or 'on tap') do not contain aspartame e.g. tonic water.

WINE

Red & White - sweet, medium & dry.

BOTTLED SHANDY

N.B. Bottled shandy is classed as a soft drink as the alcohol content must not be above 0.5% v/v. (Shandy made in a pub is stronger. See advice on 'Drinks containing significant phenylalanine').

ALCOPOPS

e.g. Hooch

ALCOHOLIC FRUIT DRINKS

e.g. Source

GINGER BEER

Is a soft drink that does not contain beer or any other source of alcohol. It is low in protein but may contain aspartame. Check the ingredients label.

Drinks containing significant phenylalanine.

The following alcoholic drinks contain some protein and should be counted as follows:-

BEER

All beer, brown ale, lager, pale ale, stout and stout extra.

1 pint counts as one and a half exchanges.

GUINNESS/MURPHY'S

1 pint counts as 2 exchanges.

STRONG ALE

250ml counts as one and a half exchanges.

PUB SHANDY

1 pint counts as half an exchange.

CREAM LIQUEUR'S

E.g. Bailey's Irish Cream, Cadbury's Cream Liqueur.

30ml counts as one exchange (as a guide a small liqueur glass holds 20ml).

Drinks containing high levels of phenylalanine.

These drinks should be avoided.

ADVOCAAT

This drink contains egg yolk and is therefore high in protein and so must not be taken.

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Produced by the National Society for Phenylketonuria
and its Medical Advisory Panel.



The National Society for Phenylketonuria (United Kingdom) Ltd.

The Society is a registered charity.

It offers support to people with PKU and their families by producing various publications including a quarterly newsletter, organising formal and informal meetings and conferences.

Further information and details can be obtained by contacting:-

The NSPKU Helpline on: 0845 603 9136

or writing to:

The National Society for Phenylketonuria (United Kingdom) Ltd.

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