

Blue Monday: Drinkaware Urges Commitment to Dry January, with Tips to Help You Stick to Your New Years Resolutions

16th January 2025 – Drinkaware, the national independent charity working to prevent and reduce alcohol misuse, encourages everyone to stay committed to their January's Resolution on 'Blue Monday', often described as the most challenging day of the year. While Blue Monday can feel like a tough day for some, it may not affect everyone in the same way, and many people find strength in continuing their positive habits despite the challenges.

Tips for Sticking to Dry January

1. **Remind yourself** why you started Dry January. Whether you started to improve your mental health, save money, or test your willpower, keeping your motivations front of mind can reinforce your resolve.
2. **Plan alcohol-free activities** – Blue Monday can feel heavy, so plan something fun. Watch a movie, go for a walk, try a new recipe, or host a game night with mocktails. Focusing on activities that don't revolve around drinking can keep your mind off alcohol.
3. **Lean on a support network** – Share your progress with friends or family who support your goal. Consider finding a friend who is also participating in Dry January to motivate each other to stick to your goals.
4. **Try alcohol alternatives** – If cravings hit, experiment with alcohol-free drinks that feel special, like mocktails or non-alcoholic drinks. They can offer the ritual of having a drink without breaking your commitment.
5. **Get back on track** – If you've had a slip-up, don't let it derail your entire month. Avoid an all-or-nothing mindset, as every day you choose to avoid alcohol is a positive step for your health and well-being.

Studies show that temporary alcohol abstinence challenges like Dry January can help individuals connect to healthier drinking habits, with half of people reporting lasting reductions in alcohol use after such challenges.¹

According to Drinkaware's Barometer, improving mental health is a key motivator for many people to reduce alcohol consumption, with 37% of people highlighting it as a driving factor for drinking less. This January, such resolutions are supported by a growing recognition of how reducing alcohol consumption can positively impact overall well-being.

Social habits are also evolving, with 48% of respondents stating they would embrace a sober night out as part of their efforts to moderate drinking. This shift reflects a broader cultural change toward mindful drinking, making prioritising health while maintaining social connections easier than ever.

For those concerned about how abstaining from alcohol might affect relationships, only 16% of people believe that not drinking would have a negative impact on friendships or connections. This challenges outdated perceptions and underscores the increasing acceptance of alcohol-free lifestyles.

Encouragingly, the Barometer also shows that 64% of individuals have either already avoided alcohol for a fixed period of time or would consider doing so to moderate drinking. This demonstrates a widespread willingness to explore the benefits of moderation, even beyond January.

The Benefits of Drinking Less

- **Improved mental health:** Drinking less can boost your mood, reduce anxiety, and give you more energy for activities that make you happy.

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- **Better physical health:** Cutting back lowers risks such as high blood pressure, heartburn, and immune system suppression. Over time, it also protects against serious conditions like liver disease and cancer.
- **Healthier appearance:** Reducing alcohol helps with weight management, hydrates your skin, and prevents redness or dullness caused by alcohol's dehydrating effects.
- **Better sleep and energy:** Alcohol-free sleep improves quality and leaves you refreshed, increasing concentration and productivity.
- **Save money** – use [Drinkaware's Drink Calculator](#) to see how much you are saving from cutting back.

Dearbhla O'Brien, CEO of Drinkaware, said: “Blue Monday can feel like a difficult day, but it’s also an opportunity to reflect on positive steps toward better health and well-being. Drinking less, even for a short time, can have many benefits. Drinkaware is here to support anyone taking on the challenge of Dry January or considering a long-term change in their drinking habits.”

Visit [drinkaware.ie](#) for more information, advice, and tips on participating in dry January. Those who may find January a difficult time of year can always look at our [support page](#) if they need extra support.

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For interviews or media enquiries, please contact:

Ciara O’Driscoll | Etch Communications | ciara@etchcomms.ie | 087 689 3600

Andrea Woods Murphy | Etch Communications | andrea@etchcomms.ie | 087 7566195

Notes to the editor:

About Drinkaware: Drinkaware is a national charity working to prevent and reduce alcohol misuse in Ireland. It is governed by an independent board and regulated by the Charities Regulator. Registered Charity Number: 20204601

For more information on research projects and publications, visit www.drinkaware.ie/research

References

1. Siconolfi, D., Tucker, J. S., Pedersen, E. R., Perez, L. G., & Dunbar, M. S. (2024). Sober Curiosity and Participation in Temporary Alcohol Abstinence Challenges in a Cohort of U.S. Emerging Adults. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs*, 85(2), 201–209. <https://doi.org/10.15288/jsad.23-00137>.
2. The Drinkaware Barometer 2024 is a national population-based survey of 1,000 adults aged 18+ conducted by Ipsos B&A in July and August 2024. It included a series of internationally recognised modules on alcohol consumption and mental health.