

## ALCOHOL AND WOMEN

**Recognising that even small amounts of alcohol affect women differently from men, Diageo seeks to raise awareness of this fact so that women can make more informed decisions about drinking or not drinking. We support numerous initiatives to prevent harmful drinking, many of which focus on women. These include programmes to prevent drinking during pregnancy as there is no known safe level.**

### THE ISSUE

Even in small amounts, alcohol affects women differently from men. Education and alcohol-misuse programmes need to be tailored to address these differences.

### DIAGEO'S POSITION

We recognise that alcohol affects women differently from men and seek to provide information and support programmes that prevent harmful drinking among women.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Alcohol affects different people in different ways. It has immediate and long-

term effects that can vary depending on the amount consumed, age, gender and other individual characteristics. Since women are generally smaller than men, the same amount of alcohol will affect women more than men.

However, even if a man and woman who weigh the same drink the same amount, the alcohol will still affect the woman more. This is because women generally have a lower percentage of natural body water than men, so they achieve higher concentrations of alcohol in the blood faster. In addition, women have less ADH, the enzyme that breaks down alcohol in the body, and so aren't as effective at processing alcohol as men.

This is why many government guidelines and other organisations in countries around the world, offer information about alcohol that is specifically tailored to women and recommend levels of drinking that are lower for women than for men.

Women are also more sensitive to alcohol in the following ways:

- Excessive consumption can make women more vulnerable to the risk of sexual assault and violence toward women
- There is no known safe level of drinking during pregnancy. Women who drink while pregnant increase the risk of having a baby with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS)
- Alcohol appears in breast milk 30 minutes after a woman starts drinking. Each standard drink takes about one hour to be eliminated. It is important to make sure that alcohol is eliminated from the body before breastfeeding.
- Many studies report that even moderate drinking may increase the risk of breast cancer for some women

### HOW WE SUPPORT OUR POSITION

Diageo seeks to raise awareness that women are more sensitive than men to the effects of alcohol through DRINKiQ.com, our global responsible drinking website, the link to which appears on all Diageo packaging, and through our DRINKiQ training. We have developed a specific DRINKiQ course for women.

We believe the DRINKiQ course is an important part of our commitment to women and our communities, that equip responsible drinking ambassadors with key facts about women and alcohol.

DRINKiQ trainings are delivered to participants of our Plan W female empowerment programmes where



possible, as well as through Diageo's other community investment programmes such as the Learning for Life hospitality training programme of which 70% of participants are women.

We also supply our employees and trade partners with items such as coasters and posters that include hints and tips for responsible drinking, including important facts that focus on women.

We fund programmes around the world to prevent drinking during pregnancy. This includes providing critical information about the facts surrounding FAS whether through brochures and leaflets, media public awareness campaigns, training and workshops. Our

support, for example, has helped the National Organisation on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (NOFAS) train 40% of midwives in the UK in FAS, allowing them to discuss FAS intelligently with their patients and increase awareness of this issue as a part of routine care. In Australia, Canada, France, Poland, South Africa, Taiwan and the United States, Diageo has supported the dissemination of brochures, ad campaigns and websites aimed at raising awareness among women and others of this important issue.

If women have questions about their drinking they should speak to their health care provider about their unique circumstances.