

[DH echoes Hong Kong Cancer Day 2018](#)

The Department of Health (DH) today (December 9) urged the public to learn about health-related harms of alcohol to prevent cancer to tie in with Hong Kong Cancer Day 2018. Hong Kong Cancer Day is an annual event that has been held by the Hong Kong Anti-Cancer Society on the second Sunday of December since 2013. As a co-organiser, the DH set up a booth at today's event to raise public awareness of various alcohol-related harms.

A spokesman for the DH said, "Alcohol is classified as Group 1 carcinogen by the International Agency for Research on Cancer of the World Health Organization (WHO) as there is sufficient evidence that alcohol causes at least seven types of cancers, including colorectal cancer, breast cancer and liver cancer. To combat the threat of non-communicable diseases such as cancer, the Government earlier this year announced 'Towards 2025: Strategy and Action Plan to Prevent and Control Non-communicable Diseases in Hong Kong', setting out nine local targets to be achieved by 2025. Among the targets, the Government aims to achieve at least 10 per cent relative reduction in the prevalence of binge drinking and harmful use of alcohol, including harmful drinking and alcohol dependence, among adults and in the prevalence of drinking among youths."

The spokesman stressed that there is no safe or recommended level of drinking to be protective against cancer formation. The WHO has never recommended alcohol drinking for the sake of improving health. Carrying 7 kilocalories (kcal) per gram, alcohol is also extremely calorific, second only to fat. Alcohol consumption easily contributes to the excess energy intake associated with weight gain in individuals. In fact, there are researches suggesting obesity per se could directly increase the risk of more than 10 cancers like liver cancer, prostate cancer, colorectal cancer and breast cancer. Hence, maintaining a healthy weight is also an effective way to prevent cancers.

To learn more about reducing the harmful use of alcohol, please visit the [relevant webpage](#) on the DH's ["Change for Health" website](#). Members of the public can also make use of the [Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test](#) on the website to assess their alcohol use and potential health risks.