

Long-term health effects of drinking alcohol*

Whole of body

- existing health conditions made worse, such as mental illness and diabetes
- death from injury or disease

Mouth, throat and voicebox

- cancer

Lungs

- inflammation, usually from infections

Breasts

- cancer (in women)

Liver

- swelling and pain
- alcoholic liver disease, such as cirrhosis
- cancer

Blood and immune system

- changes in red and white blood cells
- anaemia
- less ability to fight off infections

Skin and fat

- yellowing of skin and spider veins
- potential weight gain

Bones and muscles

- weakness
- muscle wasting

Mental health and addiction

- mood disorders, such as depression and anxiety
- alcohol dependence

Brain and nervous system

- brain damage
- memory loss
- disrupted sleep
- stroke (bleeding on the brain)
- nerve damage

Heart and circulation

- cardiovascular disease
- high blood pressure

Stomach and food pipe

- inflamed lining and bleeding
- cancer of the food pipe

Pancreas

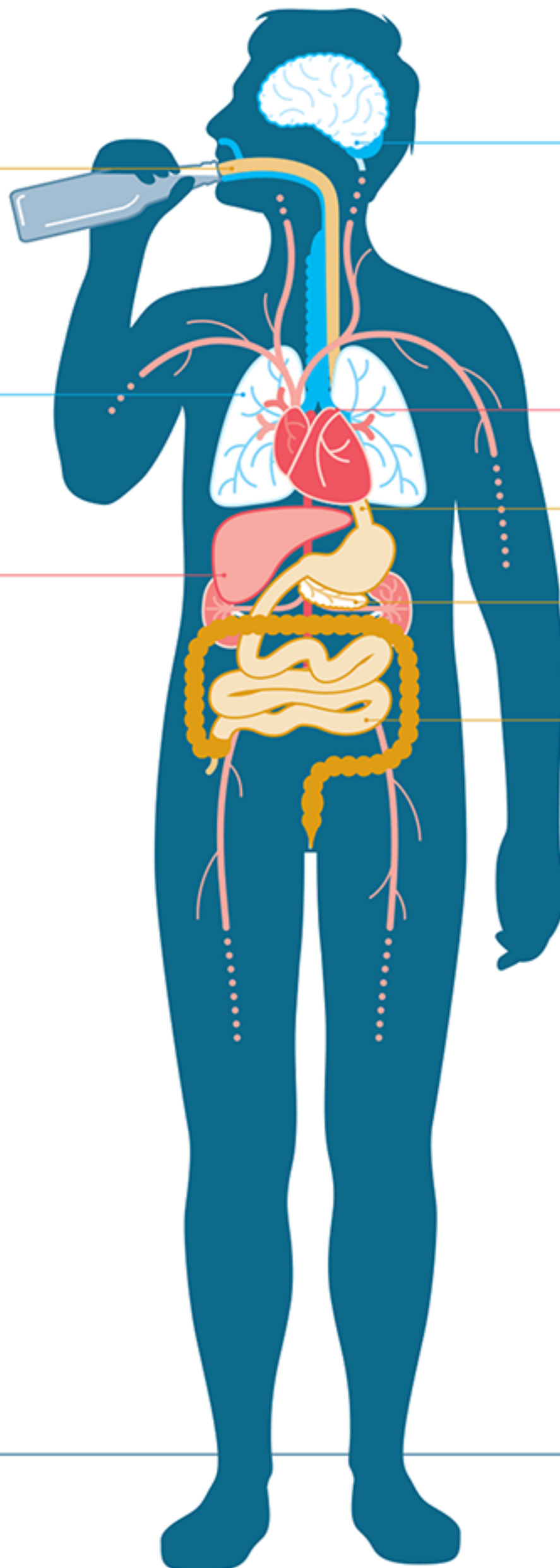
- inflammation and damage
- pancreatitis

Intestines

- inflamed lining
- cancer

Sex organs

- impotence and loss of sex drive
- wasting of testicles
- reduced fertility (both sexes)



For more information, go to alcohol.org.nz

* Risk of developing these health effects varies depending on the amount and frequency of alcohol consumed and individual factors.