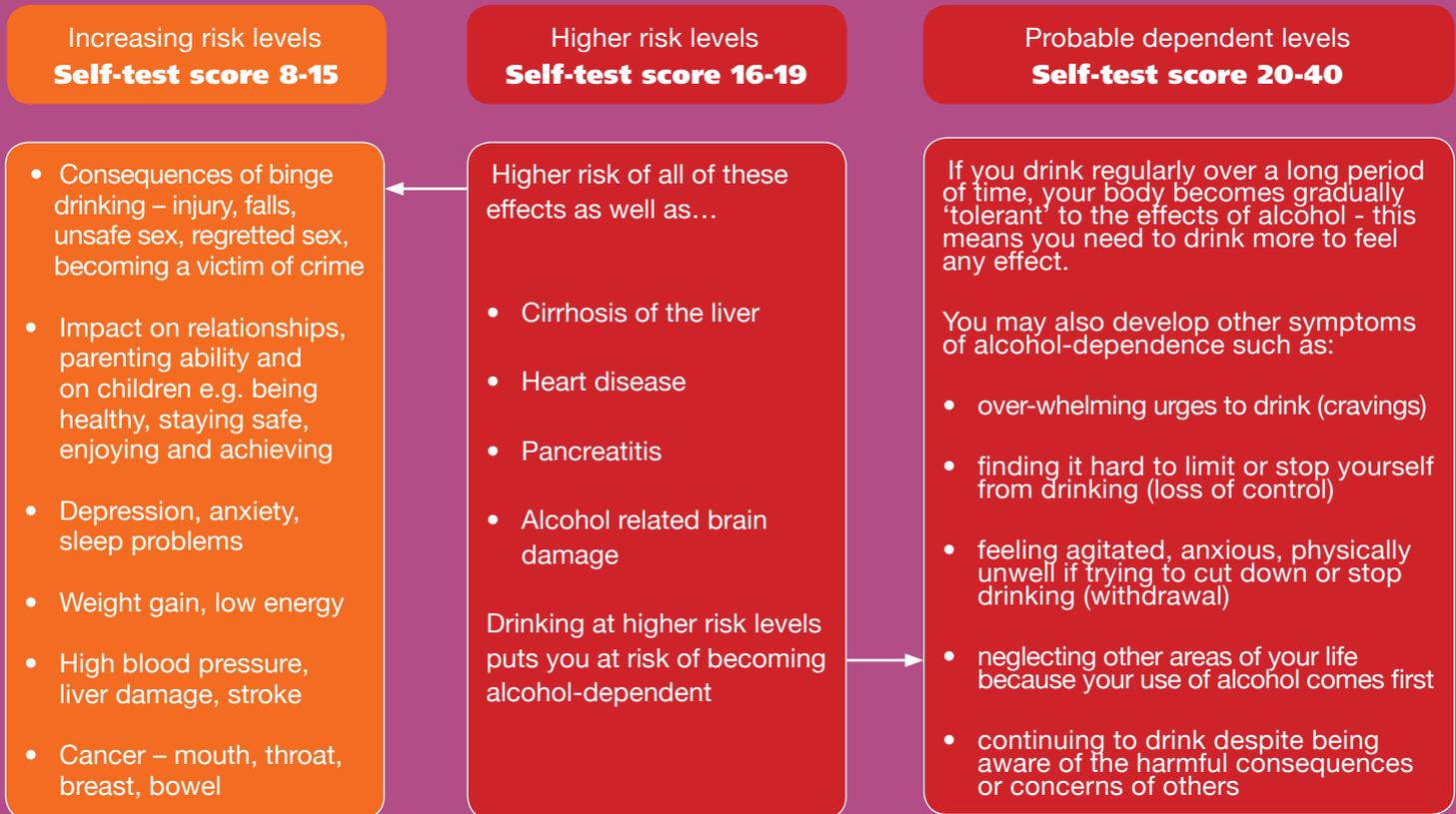# Extra advice about alcohol

Your self-test score suggests you are drinking at a level that is increasing your risk of harm and you might be at risk of more problems in the future. What do you think?

Increasing risk levels **Self-test score 8-15**	Higher risk levels **Self-test score 16-19**	Probable dependent levels **Self-test score 20-40**

Increasing risk levels — Self-test score 8-15

- Consequences of binge drinking – injury, falls, unsafe sex, regretted sex, becoming a victim of crime
- Impact on relationships, parenting ability and on children e.g. being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving
- Depression, anxiety, sleep problems
- Weight gain, low energy
- High blood pressure, liver damage, stroke
- Cancer – mouth, throat, breast, bowel

Higher risk levels — Self-test score 16-19

Higher risk of all of these effects as well as…

- Cirrhosis of the liver
- Heart disease
- Pancreatitis
- Alcohol related brain damage

Drinking at higher risk levels puts you at risk of becoming alcohol-dependent

Probable dependent levels — Self-test score 20-40

If you drink regularly over a long period of time, your body becomes gradually 'tolerant' to the effects of alcohol - this means you need to drink more to feel any effect.

You may also develop other symptoms of alcohol-dependence such as:

- over-whelming urges to drink (cravings)
- finding it hard to limit or stop yourself from drinking (loss of control)
- feeling agitated, anxious, physically unwell if trying to cut down or stop drinking (withdrawal)
- neglecting other areas of your life because your use of alcohol comes first
- continuing to drink despite being aware of the harmful consequences or concerns of others

Information exchange	A typical day
How much do you already know about alcohol and its effects?	**Take me through a typical day, and tell me where your use of alcohol might fit in.**

How important is it for you to reduce your drinking?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
On a scale of 1-10, if 1 was 'not at all important' and 10 was 'very important', what number would you give yourself right now?										

Not at all important · Very important

If you decided to reduce your drinking, how confident are you that you would succeed?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
On a scale of 1-10, if 1 was 'not at all confident' and 10 was 'very confident', what number would you give yourself right now?										

Not at all confident · Very confident

Not ready			Unsure			Ready

Thinking about change

What might be the **good things** and **not so good things** about staying at the same drinking level?
And what might be the **good things** and **not so good things** about reducing your drinking?

No change	Change
Good things about staying the same	Good things about reducing
Not so good things about staying the same	Not so good things about reducing

A 5-step plan

1. Good things about change – can you think of two or three benefits of change?

(1)

(2)

(3)

2. Set yourself a goal

What change would you like to make?

When will be a good time to start?

How?

3. High risk times – when might be difficult times or situations?

(1)

(2)

(3)

4. Prepare for high risk times – what might help you deal with these times/situations?

5. Get support – who might be able to help you to keep on track? has anything helped in the past at previous attempts to change?