

# < ALCOHOL & THE BODY

It's important to be aware of some of the different ways drinking alcohol can affect your body. The effects shown here are the same for men and women.

## EYES

Too much alcohol dilates blood vessels in the eyes, so they can look red and bloodshot. It also affects the signals sent from the eyes to the brain – vision becomes blurred and distances and speeds become harder to judge.

## HEAD

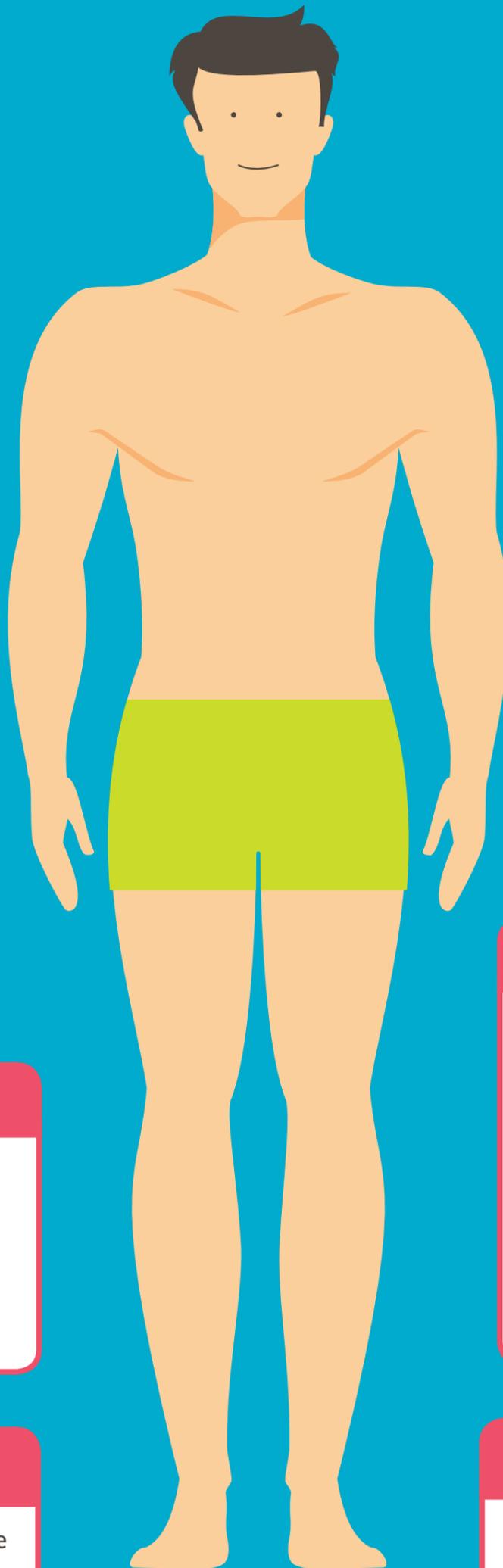
After a few drinks it can be easy for someone to act out of character. They may feel more relaxed, emotional and lose their inhibitions but this can really affect their judgement. They might make a fool of themselves, get into trouble or do something they might later regret. Alcohol draws water out of the brain leaving the drinker dehydrated and often with a bad headache.

## WAIST

Alcohol is very high in calories so it can lead to weight gain. For example, an average strength pint of beer has 180 calories which is roughly 9% of the recommended daily calorie intake for women and 7% for men.

## STOMACH

Excessive alcohol consumption can cause damage and irritation to the stomach lining, causing nausea and vomiting.



## BRAIN

Alcohol is a depressant so it slows down the brain, the control centre of the body. Alcohol can make you feel happy for a little while but the more you drink, the longer it will take for messages to travel from the brain to the rest of your body. This can result in slurred speech, walking off balance and slower reaction times.

## HEART

Regularly drinking more than the low-risk guidelines can increase your risk of developing heart disease. Drinking excessive amounts of alcohol raises blood pressure which is one of the most important risk factors for a heart attack or stroke. An increase in your blood pressure can also be caused by weight gain from excessive drinking.

## LIVER

The liver breaks down most of the alcohol a person drinks but only at a rate of roughly one standard drink per hour. Factors like the type of alcohol and how fast someone is drinking can stop the liver from working properly. Regularly drinking over the low-risk guidelines can increase your risk of liver disease and cause irreparable damage.

## SKIN

Just like the brain, too much alcohol dehydrates your skin making it look dull. It also dilates the blood vessels under the surface of the skin which can lead to ugly veins on the nose and cheeks.

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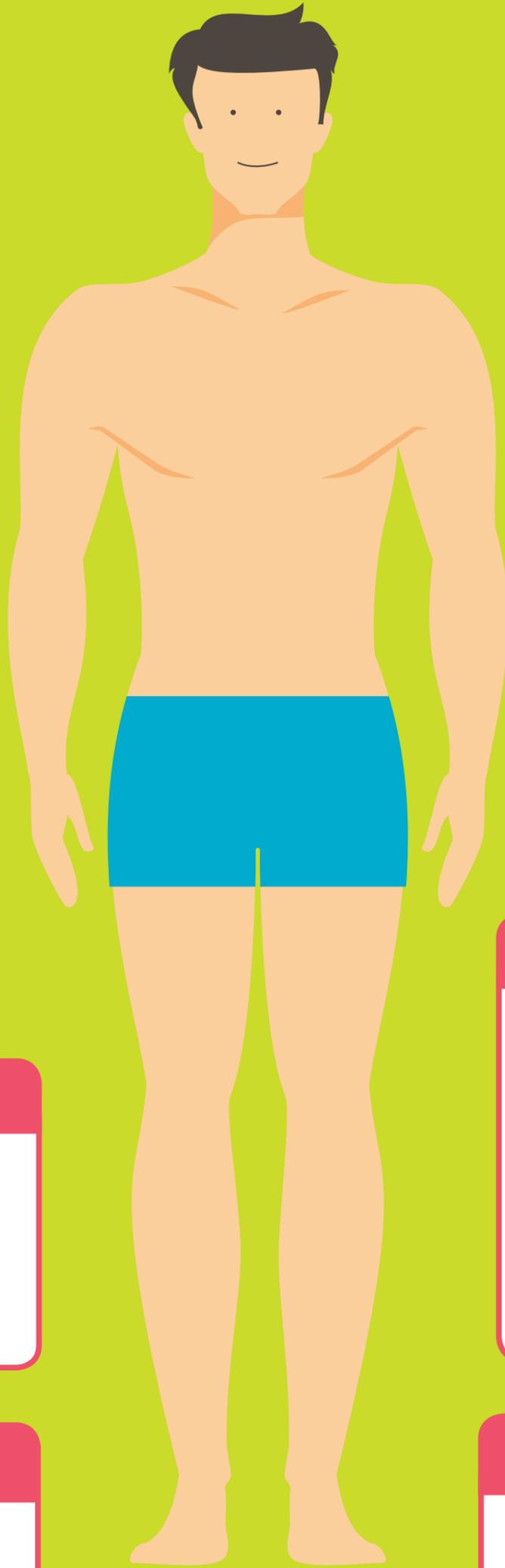
Do you know how alcohol affects the body?  
Fill in the blanks below. For a completed  
version see the other side of this poster.

EYES

HEAD

WAIST

STOMACH



BRAIN

HEART

LIVER

SKIN