

NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript

Alice

Hello and welcome to 6 Minute English. I'm Alice...

Rob

And I'm Rob...

Alice

You look very pale, Rob. Are you OK?

Rob

Well, I was at a rather boozy wedding party last night. And I had a bit too much champagne. Do you know any good hangover cures?

Alice

A **hangover** is the headache and sickness you can feel after drinking too much alcohol. And a **cure** is something that makes you better. Well, I'm **teetotal** – I don't drink alcohol. So, I'd say the best hangover cure is not to drink in the first place.

Rob

You don't believe in hair of the dog then?

Alice

No, Rob, I don't. **Hair of the dog** is the belief that drinking more alcohol when you already have a hangover will make you feel better! And **boozy** means lots of alcohol.

Rob

I can see I'm not going to get much sympathy from you. So I'm going to take a couple of painkillers and let you tell everyone what the subject of today's show is.

Alice

Alright then. Well, it's drinking too much, Rob. And I have a question for you. What is the name of the main process involved in producing alcohol? Is it...

- a) fermentation?
- b) hydration?

Or c) purification?

Rob

OK, I know it has something to do with water so I'm going to go for b) hydration. It rings a bell from chemistry lessons at school.

Alice

Well, we'll find out later on in the show whether you were listening carefully in class, Rob.

Rob

Well, er... no comment.

Alice

Well, most people are aware of the links between smoking and cancer, but fewer are aware that drinking alcohol is linked to an increased risk of future health problems. The UK government is currently trying to raise awareness with their new guidelines on how much it's safe to drink. Let's hear what Dr Michael Moseley has to say about health risks.

INSERT

Dr Michael Moseley, Science journalist and TV presenter

Unfortunately whatever level of alcohol you are drinking it is likely to increase your risk of some forms of cancer, particularly breast cancer, but also other rarer forms of cancer like head, neck, and the throat. The rest are quite low at moderate drinking but they do rise rapidly.

Rob

So any drinking at all – even one small glass of wine with your evening meal – raises your risk of cancer? Is that right?

Alice

Yes. And the health risk increases with the amount you drink.

Rob

But I thought wine was supposed to be good for you?

Alice

It's a popular belief, but medical evidence doesn't seem to support this view. Let's listen to Dr Michael Moseley again on this.

INSERT

Dr Michael Moseley, Science journalist and TV presenter

Now there's long been this idea there is this marvellous stuff in red wine called 'resveratrol' which is said to reduce your risk of all sorts of things. Unfortunately the amount you'd have

to consume would be so huge that the downsides of drinking red wine would swiftly overwhelm them.

Rob

And the **downside** of something means the disadvantages. Now Alice, what's your favourite tippie?

Alice

Well, I don't have one Rob because I'm teetotal, remember? A **tippie** is another way of saying 'an alcoholic drink'. I enjoy beetroot and kale smoothies with a dash of turmeric and ground pepper.

Rob

Kale? Yuk, that's disgusting! Now, a smoothie is a thick drink made of fruit or vegetables blended with milk or yogurt or water. Well, I like sweet stuff... maybe a banana smoothie with some honey, but beetroot and kale sounds disgusting!

Alice

Don't knock it until you've tried it. And that means try something before you criticize it.

Rob

OK, OK, but seriously. A glass of wine makes me happy and relaxed. And there are health studies that suggest being happy is good for your health.

Alice

That's true, but eating and drinking healthily makes me happy! Now moving on, it's important to put the risk of drinking alcohol...

Rob

...or horrible vegetable smoothies...

Alice

... in context. Statistically, drinking alcohol regularly represents just under a 1% lifetime risk of death. But actually an hour of TV watching or eating a bacon sandwich a couple of times a week is more dangerous.

Rob

Well, that's what I like to hear! Though... what if I'm watching TV, enjoying a beer and a lovely bacon sandwich, does that triple my lifetime risk of death?

Alice

Well, Rob, you better ask Professor David Spiegelhalter at the University of Cambridge that question. I was quoting him earlier about the TV watching and the bacon sandwich. He

works with statistics, but this is for another programme. Now, let's get on to the serious matter of today's quiz question. I asked: What is the name of the main process involved in producing alcohol? Is it... a) fermentation, b) hydration or c) purification?

Rob

Well, I said b) hydration. Though you were **sceptical**, weren't you, Alice?

Alice

Yes. And I was right to be sceptical, which means 'doubtful', because b) is the wrong answer I'm afraid, Rob. The main process involved in producing alcohol is **fermentation**, which is the process in which yeast or bacteria changes sugar to alcohol. Hydration is the process of making your body absorb water. And purification is the act of removing some harmful things from something. Actually, have this glass of water, Rob. Hydration is a good hangover cure – much better than hair of the dog.

Rob

Cheers, Alice!

Alice

Now let's hear the words we learned today.

Rob

They are:
hangover
cure
teetotal
hair of the dog
boozy
downside
tipple
don't knock it until you've tried it
sceptical
fermentation

Alice

Well, that's the end of today's 6 Minute English. Keep hydrated and don't forget to join us again soon.

Both

Bye.

Vocabulary

hangover

the headache and sickness you can feel after drinking too much alcohol

cure

something that makes you better

teetotal

someone who doesn't drink alcohol

hair of the dog

the belief that drinking more alcohol when you already have a hangover will make you feel better

boozy

lots of alcohol

downside

disadvantages

tipple

alcoholic drink

don't knock it until you've tried it

try something before you criticize it

sceptical

doubtful about whether something is true or not

fermentation

the process in which yeast or bacteria change sugar to alcohol