Safer Drinking Tips (provided by EIDGE Vancouver)

1. **Be prepared before you drink**
   - Take your medication, eat something (or drink a meal replacement) and have a big glass of water before or after your first drink of the day.
   - Let your friends/family know where you’ll be drinking if you are going on a bender.

2. **Mixing and diluting your drinks**
   - Pre-mix your drinks with your preferred mix (orange juice, cola, etc.) to help dilute the overall alcohol percentage and make your drinks last longer.

3. **Hydrate before & during any drinking session**
   - Keep a bottle or glass of water nearby and after each drink, have a drink of water.

4. **Know your limits**
   - Count your cans and bottles and know when you started drinking so you have a better idea if you should slow down.
   - Some alcohols affect people differently. Avoid the alcohols that aren't a good fit for you. A certain type of alcohol might cause you to black out or fall down more so try not to drink that.

We would like to thank the members of the Eastside Illicit Drinkers Group for Education (EIDGE) who contributed the safer drinking tips and gave feedback on the poster design.
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5 Drink in safe places

- In the summer stay in the shade, in the winter try to keep warm and dry.
- Drink with others or if you are drinking alone, pick a place that is well known to your friends so they can find you and let them know where you will be.

6 Tips for tracking your drinking amounts

- Keep your cans (or pull tabs) so you can count the total.
- Mark your bottles or pour out a specific amount (e.g., half the bottle) so it is easier to track, especially if diluting or mixing.

7 Cutting back

- Get a sense of how much you are drinking on an average day (e.g., 8 cans of 8% beer). Then if you want to cut down you can make smaller goals like “drink 1 less can of beer a day” (e.g., 7 cans of 8% beer).
- If you are cutting back and might be tempted to drink all your alcohol, hide a few around your place or give them to a friend for safe keeping until you need them.
- Before stopping all at once, make sure to consult your healthcare person to help manage withdrawal.

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