

Beware the morning after

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With the Easter break approaching and many involved in family celebrations, Staffordshire's Road Safety Team is asking us to think before we drive.

Nearly one in six of all deaths on the road involve drivers who are over the legal alcohol limit and recent cases in the news bring home the tragic consequences of drinking and driving.

The legal limit in the UK is 80 milligrammes of alcohol in 100 millilitres of blood but the fact is any amount of alcohol affects how well you drive.

It's difficult to calculate how long alcohol takes to leave your system. And if you have had a lot to drink during the evening it is more than likely that you will still be over the drink drive limit the morning after.

Nothing you do can get the alcohol out of your system any quicker. Common methods of sobering up drinking coffee, sleep, a shower will not help. Time is the only way.

The penalties for drinking and driving are steep - if you drive or try to drive whilst over the legal limit or drunk there is a maximum penalty of 6 months' imprisonment, a fine of up to £5,000 and a minimum 12 months driving ban. An endorsement for a drink-driving offence also remains on a driving licence for 11 years.

Cabinet member for highways Mike Maryon said: "If you are having a drink book a taxi or nominate someone to stay on soft drinks and drive you home.

"But beware the next day. If there is any chance you may still be over the limit don't risk it. The legal consequences are serious enough but to have a criminal record, lose your driving licence or to be responsible for a death or serious injury would really change your life for ever."