A POCKET GUIDE FOR Alcohol Screening and Brief Intervention

Updated 2005 Edition

This pocket guide is condensed from the 34-page NIAAA guide, Helping Patients Who Drink Too Much: A Clinician’s Guide. Visit www.niaaa.nih.gov/guide for related professional support resources, including: patient education handouts, preformatted progress notes, animated slide show for training, materials in Spanish

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National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism

HOW TO SCREEN FOR HEAVY DRINKING

STEP 1 Ask About Alcohol Use

Ask: Do you sometimes drink beer, wine, or other alcoholic beverages?

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HOW TO ASSESS FOR ALCOHOL USE DISORDERS

STEP 2 Assess For Alcohol Use Disorders

Next, determine if there is a maladaptive pattern of alcohol use, causing clinically significant impairment or distress.

STEP 3 Advise and Assist

For at-risk drinking (no abuse or dependence)

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FOR AT-RISK DRINKING (no abuse or dependence)

STEP 3 Advise and Assist

For patients who have dependence, consider:

Address coexisting disorders—medical and psychiatric—as needed.

• Acknowledge that change is difficult.
• Support efforts to cut down or abstain.
• Encourage to return if unable to maintain abstinence.
• Reassess at least annually.

STEP 4 At Followup: Continue Support

REMEMBER: Document alcohol use and review goals at each visit.

Was patient able to meet and sustain drinking goal?

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A standard drink in the United States is any drink that contains about 14 grams of pure alcohol (about 0.6 fluid ounces or 14 grams of pure alcohol). Below are U.S. standard drink equivalents as well as the number of standard drinks in different container sizes for dry measurements. These are approximate, since different brands and types of beverages vary in their actual alcohol content.

**WHAT’S A STANDARD DRINK?**

**BEER OR COOLER**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alcohol</th>
<th>San Diego</th>
<th>Approximate Number of Standard Drinks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12 oz.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 oz.</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 oz.</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 oz.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MALT LIQUOR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alcohol</th>
<th>San Diego</th>
<th>Approximate Number of Standard Drinks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 oz.</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 oz.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 oz.</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 oz.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE WINE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alcohol</th>
<th>San Diego</th>
<th>Approximate Number of Standard Drinks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>750 mL</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**80-proof DISTILLED SPIRITS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alcohol</th>
<th>San Diego</th>
<th>Approximate Number of Standard Drinks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.5 oz.</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**40% alcohol**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alcohol</th>
<th>San Diego</th>
<th>Approximate Number of Standard Drinks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 oz.</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WHAT'S YOUR DRINKING PATTERN?**

**HOW COMMON ARE ALCOHOLIC DRINKING PATTERNS?**

**WHAT YOU'VE DRUNK IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS—SUMMARY**

Based on the following limitations—summary: On any DAY—Never more than (4 men) or (3 women) 

And in a typical WEEK—Never more than 14 drinks or 7 drinks a day a week

**Never exceed the daily or weekly limit**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exceed only the daily limit</th>
<th>Exceed both daily and weekly limits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 out of 10 in this group exceed the daily limit</td>
<td>(40 oz. to 118 oz.) has more than one a week</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Percentage of U.S. adults aged 18 or older**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Combination of prevalence of alcohol and abuse dependence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Combined prevalence of alcohol and abuse dependence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WHAT COMMON DRUGS ARE USED WITH THIS PATTERNS?**

**PRESCRIBING MEDICATIONS**

**Extended-Release Injectable Naltrexone (Vivitrol®)**

**Acamprosate (Campral®)**

**Disulfiram (Antabuse®)**

**Contraindications**

**Precautions**

**Serious adverse reactions**

**Common side effects**

**Examples of drug interactions**

**Usual adult dosage**

**Notes**: Whether or not a medication is prescribed and in what amount is a matter of judgment between individuals and their health care providers. The prescribing information provided here is not a substitute for the patient package insert or other drug references used by clinicians. For patient information, visit http://medication.org.

The chart below contains excerpts from page 16 of NIAAA's Helping Patients Who Drink Too Much: A Clinician's Guide. It does not provide complete information and is not meant to be a substitute for the patient package insert or other drug references used by clinicians. For patient information, visit http://medication.org.