### What Counts as a Drink? A Binge?

The drinks shown below are different sizes, but each one has about the same amount of pure alcohol (14 grams or 0.6 fluid ounce) and counts as a single “standard” drink. These serve as examples; alcohol content can vary greatly across different types of beer, malt liquor, and wine.

Below is the approximate number of standard drinks in different-sized containers of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Drink</th>
<th>12 oz</th>
<th>8–9 oz</th>
<th>5 oz</th>
<th>1.5 oz</th>
<th>.5 oz</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular beer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/2</td>
<td>1/3</td>
<td>1/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malt liquor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table wine</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100-proof distilled spirits</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1/6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### What kinds of alcohol are kids drinking these days?

All kinds, with variations by region and fad. In many areas, distilled alcohol beverages “in pop” among youth, whereas wine appears less preferred. Young people are also mixing alcohol with caffeine, either in premixed drinks or by adding liquor to energy drinks. With this dangerous combination, drinkers may feel somewhat less drunk than if they'd had alcohol alone, but they are just as likely to overdose and are more likely to take risks.

#### What’s a “child-sized” or “teen-sized” binge?

1 in 3 children start drinking by the end of 8th grade. Of them, half report having been drunk.

You are in a prime position to help your patients avoid alcohol related harm.

### Questions About Providing Confidential Health Care to Youth?

All of the major medical organizations and numerous current laws support the ability of clinicians to provide confidential health care, within established guidelines, for adolescents who use alcohol. See the full Guide, page 25, for more information.

For details specific to your specialty and State:

- See confidentiality policy statements from professional organization(s):
  - American Academy of Pediatrics
  - American Academy of Family Physicians
  - Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine
  - American Medical Association

Contact your State medical society for information on your State’s laws.

Visit the Center for Adolescent Health and the Law for monographs on minor consent laws professional association policies: www.cacl.org

### Brief Intervention & Referral Resources

Four Basic Principles of Motivational Interviewing:

- Express Empathy with a warm, nonjudgmental stance, active listening, and reflecting back what is said.
- Develop Discrepancy between the patient’s choice to drink and his or her goals, values, or beliefs.
- Roll with Resistance by acknowledging the patient’s viewpoint, avoiding a debate, and affirming autonomy.
- Support Self-efficacy by expressing confidence and pointing to strengths and past successes.

For more information, see the full Guide, page 29, or visit:

- www.motivationalinterview.org
- www.motivationalinterview.net

### To Find Local Specialty Treatment Options:

- Ask health behavioral practitioners affiliated with your practice for recommendations.
- Seek local directories of behavioral health services.
- Contact local hospitals and mental health service organizations.
- Contact the Substance Abuse Facility Treatment Locator (seek centers specializing in adolescents) at 1–800–662–HELP or visit www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov.
- For more suggestions, see the full Guide, p. 34.

#### List your local resources below.

#### Four Ways To Find Local Specialty Treatment Options

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### What is the “Alcohol Withdrawal Scale”? (AWS)

The AWS is a commonly used tool to assess alcohol withdrawal symptoms in adolescents and adults. It consists of 10 items that cover both physical and psychological symptoms, and each item is rated on a scale from 0 to 4.

#### Questions:

1. Have any of your close friends stopped drinking recently?
2. Do you feel somewhat less drunk than if you'd had alcohol alone, but you are just as likely to overdose and are more likely to take risks?
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Elementary School (ages 9–11)

Patient: How many days?

“In the past year, have you ever had more than a few sips of any drink containing alcohol?”

Any drinking by friends heightens concern.

Middle School (ages 11–14)

Patient: How many days?

“This past year, how many days have you had more than a few sips of any drink containing alcohol?”

Any drinking by friends heightens concern.

High School (ages 14–18)

Friends: How much?

“If your friends drink, how many drinks do they have on an occasion?”

Binge drinking by friends heightens concern.

For elementary and middle school patients, start with the friends’ question. Choose the questions that align with the patient’s school level, as opposed to age, for patients ages 11 or 14. Exclude alcohol for religious purposes.

Elementary School (ages 9–11)

Patient: Any drinking?

“How about you—have you ever had more than a few sips of any drink containing alcohol?”

Any drinking by friends heightens concern.

Middle School (ages 11–14)

Patient: How many days?

“In the past year, have you ever had more than a few sips of any drink containing alcohol?”

Any drinking by friends heightens concern.

High School (ages 14–18)

Friends: How much?

“If your friends drink, how many drinks do they have on an occasion?”

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