



CAGE+2+Y

Health Professionals' Screening Tool for Alcohol Use

A good assessment is an intervention in itself.

Health professionals play an important role in recognizing and modifying patients' drinking behaviour. Your brief intervention can reduce the risks associated with alcohol use including injuries and chronic diseases.

This tool helps reinforce the Low-Risk Drinking Guidelines (LRDG) in the general population. The LRDG are for people of legal drinking age. They are not for everyone. **Patients who have a drinking problem require more intense intervention.**

Use the LRDG to make your discussions easier and more effective.

0
2
9
14

Zero drinks = lowest risk of an alcohol-related problem. Recommended for special populations (drivers, women who are considering pregnancy, who are pregnant or who are breastfeeding, and others at risk.)

No more than **2 standard drinks** on any one day

Women: up to **9 standard drinks** a week

Men: up to **14 standard drinks** a week

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Reduce the risk of dependency. Have at least one alcohol-free day per week.

What is a standard drink?

	≈		≈		≈		≈	
Table Wine 142 ml (5 oz.) (10-12% alcohol)		Spirits 43 ml (1.5 oz.) (40% alcohol)		Cooler 341 ml (12 oz.) (4-5% alcohol)		Fortified Wine i.e. Port, Sherry 85 ml (3 oz.) (16-18% alcohol)		Regular Beer 341 ml (12 oz.) (4-5% alcohol)

ASK

- Cut down** Have you ever felt that you should cut down on your drinking?
- Annoyed** Have people annoyed you by criticizing your drinking?
- Guilty** Have you ever felt bad or guilty about your drinking?
- Eye-opener** Have you ever had a drink first thing in the morning to steady your nerves or get rid of a hangover?
- 1.** On a typical day, how many drinks do you have?
- 2.** On average, how many days a week do you drink alcohol?
- Year** If the patient answers yes to any of the CAGE questions ask, has this occurred during the past year?

ASSESS

The patient may be at risk for alcohol-related problems if the patient:

- answers yes to any of the CAGE questions in the past year, and/or
- drinks beyond the LRDG.

ADVISE

- Advise the abstainer that they do not need to start drinking. Heart health benefits can be obtained in other ways such as healthy eating, being active and living smoke-free.
- Advise those that drink within the LRDG that heart health benefits can be obtained by drinking one drink every other day and mainly apply to those over age 45.
- Advise that no drinking level is risk free.
- Advise that any drinking impairs driving or operating machinery.
- Advise the problem drinker to cut down to the LRDG.
- Advise the alcohol dependent drinker to abstain.

ASSIST PROBLEM DRINKER

- C**learly express concern.
- A**dvice patient to drink within the LRDG.
- N**egotiate a change. Discuss past efforts. Plan next steps.

ASSIST DEPENDENT DRINKER

- C**learly express concern.
- A**dvice patient to abstain.
- N**egotiate a change. Discuss past efforts. Refer the patient who is unable to drink within the LRDG to an addiction counselling agency. (See reverse.) Plan next steps.

Close on positive terms.

Resources

Drug and Alcohol Registry of Treatment (DART)

DART provides information about drug and alcohol treatment services in Ontario.

Call the Drug and Alcohol Treatment Infoline

1-800-565-8603 toll-free, confidential, anonymous, open 24 hours

or visit

<http://www.dart.on.ca/>