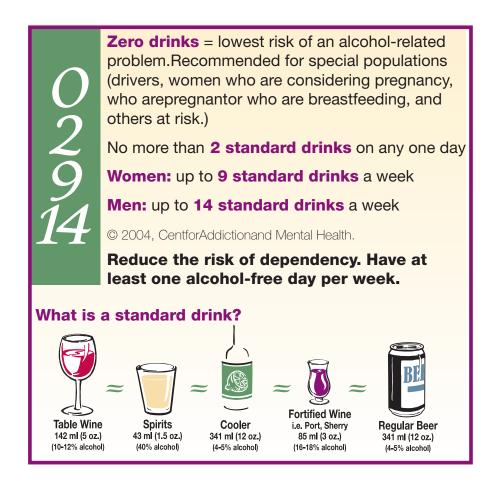


A good assessment is an intervention in itself.

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.





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

Clearly express concern.

Advise patient to drink within the LRDG.

Negotiate a change. Discuss past efforts. Plan next steps.

ASSIST DEPENDENT DRINKER

Clearly express concern.

Advise patient to abstain.

Negotiate 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/

