

## LOW-RISK DRINKING LIMITS

Source: National Institutes of Health

MEN 18-65



No more than:  
**4 drinks per day**  
AND no more than:  
**14 drinks per week**

WOMEN 18-65\*



No more than:  
**3 drinks per day**  
AND no more than:  
**7 drinks per week**

AGE 66+



No more than:  
**3 drinks per day**  
AND no more than:  
**7 drinks per week**

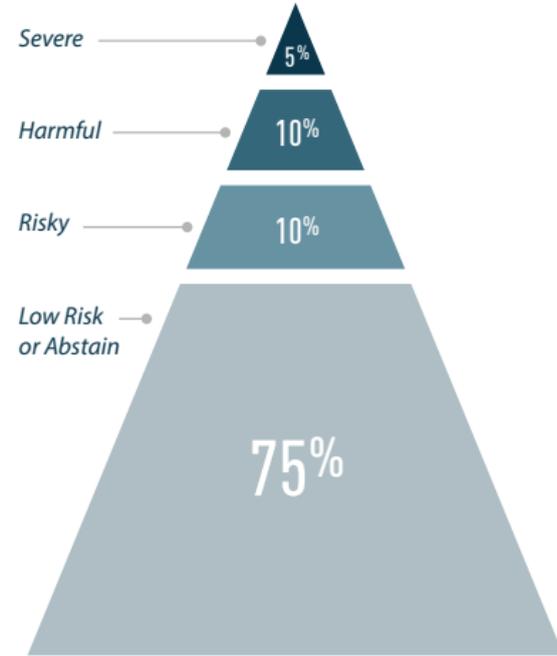
\*Women who are pregnant or breastfeeding should not drink.

## WHAT COUNTS AS ONE DRINK?



**One drink is:**  
12-ounce can of beer  
5-ounce glass of wine  
A shot of hard liquor (1½ ounces)

## RISK ZONE PYRAMID



Adapted from World Health Organization



RISK ZONE	I—LOW RISK	II—RISKY	III—HARMFUL	IV—SEVERE
AUDIT Score	0-3	4-9	10-13	14+
DAST Score	0	1-2	3-5	6+
Description of Zone	"At low risk for health or social complications."	"May develop health problems or existing problems may worsen."	"Has experienced negative effects from substance use."	"Could benefit from more assessment and assistance."

## Raise the subject

- Explain your role; ask permission to discuss alcohol/drug use screening forms
- Ask about alcohol/drug use patterns: "What does your alcohol/drug use look like in a typical week?"
- Listen carefully; use reflections to demonstrate understanding

## Provide feedback

- Share AUDIT/DAST zone(s) and description; review low-risk drinking limits; explore patient's reaction: "Your score puts you in the \_\_\_\_ zone, which means \_\_\_\_\_. The low-risk limits are \_\_\_\_\_. What do you think about that?"
- Explore connection to health/social/work issues (patient education materials): "What connection might there be...?"

## Enhance motivation

- Ask about pros/cons: "What do you like about your alcohol/drug use? What don't you like?"
- Explore readiness to change: "On a scale of 0-10, how ready are you to make a change in your alcohol/drug use?"
- If readiness is greater than 2: "Why that number and not a \_\_\_\_ (lower one)?"  
If 0-2: "How would your alcohol/drug use have to impact your life for you to think about changing?"

## Negotiate plan

- Summarize the conversation (zone, pros/cons, readiness); ask question: "What steps would you be willing to take?"
- If not ready to plan, stop the intervention; offer patient education materials; thank patient
- Explore patient's goal for change (offer options if needed); write down steps to achieve goal; assess confidence
- Negotiate follow-up visit; thank patient

To find a Treatment Provider go to:  
[findtreatment.samhsa.gov/TreatmentLocator](http://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/TreatmentLocator),  
 or call 800-662-HELP (4357)

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