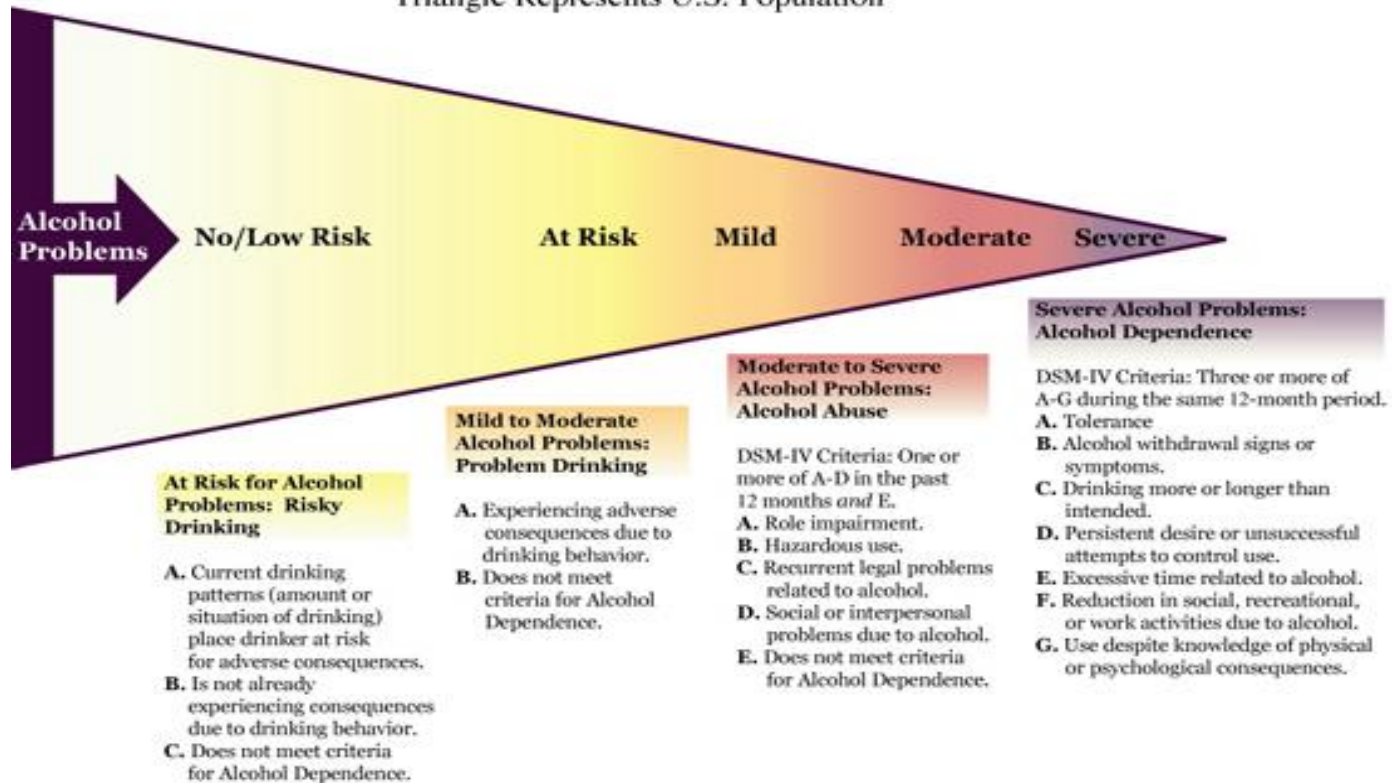


## Talking to your member – your friend – yourself – about drinking.

The information from the pages that follows is from *Alcohol Problems in Intimate Relationships*, [pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/niaaa-guide/index.htm](http://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/niaaa-guide/index.htm), a free online guide published by the NIAAA for use by Marriage and Family Therapists.

**Figure 1. A Continuum of Alcohol Problems**  
Triangle Represents U.S. Population



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### To begin:

Note what Scripture says about drunkenness: I Corinthians 6:9-11 “Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the Kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. But that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.”

Note

- Drunkenness can occur with people who are No/Low Risk all the way to Severe Risk on the above banner.
- It is important to know the definitions provided by the psychological community of the US and promoted by the US Government. These definitions are found in the Moderate to Severe columns above.
- God has a harsh condemnation for drunkards in I Corinthians 6-9-11
- In the same section of Scripture God promises forgiveness through Jesus – vs. 11.

## Talking to your member – your friend – yourself – about drinking.

The chart on the next page is very helpful for you to keep track of the information that you need to do an intervention with self or another person.

### Step One: Do the Screening Questions:

#### Basic Quantity-Frequency Questions (Self Report)

- Do you drink alcohol, including beer, wine, or hard liquor?  
If "no," discontinue the screen.
- On average, how many days per week do you drink alcohol?
- On a typical day when you drink, how many (standard) drinks do you have?

Explain that a "standard drink" is defined as: 1.5 oz. shot of hard liquor, 5 oz. of table wine, 3 oz. of fortified wine, or 12 oz. of regular beer. You may also reproduce the graphic found in Appendix B and use it to prompt accurate responses to this question.

- What is the maximum number of drinks you consumed on any given day during the last month?

#### CAGE Questions (Self Report)

- Have you ever felt you should Cut down on your drinking?
- Have people Annoyed you by criticizing your drinking?
- Have you ever felt bad or Guilty about your drinking?
- Have you ever had a drink first thing in the morning to steady your nerves or to get rid of a hangover (Eye opener)?

**IF** there is a positive response to any of the CAGE questions, ask whether the incident(s) happened during the past year.

#### Interpreting Risk from the Screening Questions

An individual may be at risk for alcohol-related problems if alcohol consumption is:

For adult males less than 65 years old:

- 14 or more drinks per week, or
- 5 or more drinks during any given day

For all adult females and males 65 years or older:

- 7 or more drinks per week, or
- 4 or more drinks during any given day

Or if:

One or more responses to the CAGE questions referring to the past year were positive.

**Instructions for the Sample Feedback Sheet (below) Item 1**

- **Average number of standard drinks consumed each week.** A standard drink is equal to one 12-ounce beer, one 5-ounce glass of table wine, one 3-ounce glass of fortified wine, or a 1.5-ounce shot of hard liquor.
- **Average number of drinks ingested on each drinking day.** Calculate this number by adding together the total number of drinks consumed, and divide by the number of days the client drank.
- **Highest consumption.** Look at all the drinking information and write in the largest amount the client drank on any given day.

**Figure 6. Sample Feedback Sheet**

**Sample Feedback Sheet**

1. Based on the information I obtained during the assessment, I calculated the number of "standard drinks" you consumed each day and have summarized three important indicators of your drinking:

*Total number of standard drinks per week \_\_\_\_\_*  
*Average number of standard drinks per drinking day \_\_\_\_\_*  
*Highest consumption in a day \_\_\_\_\_*

2. When we look at everyone who drinks in the United States, you have been drinking more than approximately \_\_\_\_\_ percent of the population of women/men in the country.

3. I also estimated your highest and average blood alcohol level (BAL) in the past month. Your BAL is based on how many standard drinks you consume, the length of time over which you drink that much, whether you are a man or a woman, and how much you weigh. So,

*Your estimated peak BAL in an average week was \_\_\_\_\_*  
*Your estimated average BAL in an average week was \_\_\_\_\_*

This is a measure of how intoxicated you typically become. In the U.S. the legal intoxication limit is .08 or .10 (you may want to confirm the BAL limit for your specific state).

4. You have experienced negative consequences from drinking. Here are some of the most important:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions for Item 2 (above on the Sample feedback Sheet) compares the drinker to national norms.**

- **Comparison of drinking to national norms.**<sup>41</sup> To make this comparison, you can refer to a standard chart (See *Table 2.*) to determine where the person's drinking falls. For example, a man who drinks 28 drinks per week is at the 90th percentile — 90% of men in the U.S. drink less than he does. Such feedback is valuable because many heavy drinkers associate with other heavy drinkers and believe that their own drinking pattern is "normal" rather than heavy.

**Table 2. Alcohol Consumption Norms for U.S. Adults (%)**

**Note:** The numbers in this table are cumulative percentages—i.e. the percentage of the population that drinks at or below each drinking level.

Drinks per week	Men	Women	Total
0	29	41	35
1	46	68	58
2	54	77	66
3	57	78	68
4	61	82	71
5	67	86	77
6	68	87	78
7	70	89	80
8	71	89	81
9	73	90	82
10	75	91	83
11	75	91	84
12	77	92	85
13	77	93	86
14	79	94	87
15	80	94	87
16	81	94	88
17	82	95	89
18	84	96	90
19	85	96	91
20	86	96	91
21	88	96	92
22	88	97	92
23-24	88	97	93
25	89	98	93
26-27	89	98	94
28	90	98	94
29	91	98	95
30-33	92	98	95
34-35	93	98	95
36	93	98	96
37-39	94	98	96
40	94	99	96
41-46	95	99	97
47-48	96	99	97
49-50	97	99	98
51-62	97	99	98
63-64	97	>99.5	99
65-84	98	>99.6	99
85-101	99	>99.9	99
102-159	99	>99.9	>99.5
160+	>99.5	>99.9	>99.8

**Source:** 1990 National Alcohol Survey, Alcohol Research Group, Berkeley.



**Item 3 on the Sample Feedback Sheet: Blood alcohol level (BAL).**

To determine BAL, you weigh four factors: amount consumed; time over which alcohol is consumed; body weight; and gender. Use of the standard BAL charts (See Figure 7.) yields information on usual BAL as well as the BAL achieved on the heaviest drinking days. Comparing the BAL calculated to the legally defined limit for intoxicated driving in the client's state of residence (typically .08 or .10) provides a context in which to understand the person's BAL. Note: Drinks by weight to find the BAL, but then subtract .015 for each hour the person has spent drinking. See instructions on the bottom of the BAL charts.

**Figure 7. Blood Alcohol Level Estimation Charts**

Men										
Approximate Blood Alcohol Percentage										
Drinks	Body Weight in Pounds								Sample Behavioral Effects	
	100	120	140	160	180	200	220	240		
0	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	Only Completely Safe Limit
1	.04	.03	.03	.02	.02	.02	.02	.02	.02	Impairment Begins
2	.08	.06	.05	.05	.04	.04	.03	.03	.03	Driving Skills Significantly Affected; Information Processing Altered
3	.11	.09	.08	.07	.06	.06	.05	.05	.05	
4	.15	.12	.11	.09	.08	.08	.07	.06	.06	
5	.19	.16	.13	.12	.11	.09	.09	.08	.08	
6	.23	.19	.16	.14	.13	.11	.10	.09	.09	Legally Intoxicated; Criminal Penalties; Reaction Time Slowed; Loss of Balance; Impaired Movement; Slurred Speech
7	.26	.22	.19	.16	.15	.13	.12	.11	.11	
8	.30	.25	.21	.19	.17	.15	.14	.13	.13	
9	.34	.28	.24	.21	.19	.17	.15	.14	.14	
10	.38	.31	.27	.23	.21	.19	.17	.16	.16	
One drink is 1.5 oz. shot of hard liquor, 12 oz. of beer, or 5 oz. of table wine.										
Women										
Approximate Blood Alcohol Percentage										
Drinks	Body Weight in Pounds								Sample Behavioral Effects	
	90	100	120	140	160	180	200	220		240
0	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	Only Completely Safe Limit
1	.05	.05	.04	.03	.03	.03	.02	.02	.02	Impairment Begins
2	.10	.09	.08	.07	.06	.05	.05	.04	.04	Driving Skills Significantly Affected; Information Processing Altered
3	.15	.14	.11	.10	.09	.08	.07	.06	.06	
4	.20	.18	.15	.13	.11	.10	.09	.08	.08	
5	.25	.23	.19	.16	.14	.13	.11	.10	.09	
6	.30	.27	.23	.19	.17	.15	.14	.12	.11	Legally Intoxicated; Criminal Penalties; Reaction Time Slowed; Loss of Balance; Impaired Movement; Slurred Speech
7	.35	.32	.27	.23	.20	.18	.16	.14	.13	
8	.40	.36	.30	.26	.23	.20	.18	.17	.15	
9	.45	.41	.34	.29	.26	.23	.20	.19	.17	
10	.51	.45	.38	.32	.28	.25	.23	.21	.19	
One drink is 1.5 oz. shot of hard liquor, 12 oz. of beer, or 5 oz. of table wine.										
Subtract .015 for each hour that you take to consume the number of drinks listed in the table. For example, if you are a 160 pound woman, and have two drinks in two hours, your BAC would be .06 - (2 x .015) = .03										
NOTE: Blood Alcohol Level (BAL) charts do not take into consideration a wide range of additional variables that contribute to the determination of BAL's achieved and the behavioral effects experienced at a given BAL. These additional variables include: age, water to body mass ratio, ethanol metabolism, tolerance level, drugs or medications taken, amount and type of food in the stomach during consumption, speed of consumption, and general physical condition. <b>Thus, BAL charts only provide extremely rough estimates and should never be used alone to determine any individual's safe level of drinking.</b>										
Adapted from BAC Charts produced by the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information.										

**Item 4 on the Sample Feedback Sheet**

Item 4 on the Sample Feedback Sheet is filled in through the person’s responses to your questions. These answers help you and the person you are talking to about drinking gauge the impact that alcohol is having or has had upon his or her life. These answers help you and them understand where they are regarding risk – see the first chart in this packet.

**What is a standard drink?**

Many people become confused about what a standard drink is. For the purpose of these charts and this discussion a standard drink is one of the items below.

**Figure B-1. Standard Drinks Chart**

WHAT IS A STANDARD DRINK?						
A standard drink contains about 14 grams (about .6 fluid ounces) of pure alcohol. Below are approximate standard drink equivalents.						
12 oz. of beer or cooler	8-9 oz. of malt liquor 8.5 oz. shown in a 12-oz glass that, if full, would hold about 1.5 standard drinks of malt liquor	5 oz. of table wine	3-4 oz. of fortified or dessert wine 3.5 oz. shown	2-3 oz. of cordial, liqueur, or aperitif 2.5 oz. shown	1.5 oz. of brandy (a single jigger)	1.5 oz. of spirits (a single jigger of gin, vodka, whiskey, etc.) Shown straight and in a highball glass with ice to show level before adding mixer
						
12 oz.	8.5 oz.	5 oz.	3.5 oz.	2.5 oz.	1.5 oz.	1.5 oz.
<p><b>Note:</b> Some of these drinks are sold in containers holding multiple standard drinks. For example, malt liquor is often sold in 16-, 22-, and 40-oz. bottles that contain between two and five standard drinks.</p>						

This material and these charts are from Roberts, Linda J., & McCrady, Barbara S., *Alcohol Problems in Intimate Relationships: A Guide for Marriage and Family Therapists*, National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, Washington, DC: 2003. This book is a part of the public domain and may be reproduced or copied without further permission from the Institute or the authors. Citation of the source is appreciated. [pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/niaaa-guide/index.htm](http://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/niaaa-guide/index.htm)

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