What Is a Standard Drink?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard Drink</th>
<th>Alcohol Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12 fl. oz. of regular beer</td>
<td>≈ 5% alcohol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8–9 fl. oz. of malt liquor (shown in a 12 oz. glass)</td>
<td>≈ 7% alcohol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 fl. oz. of table wine</td>
<td>≈ 12% alcohol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 fl. oz. shot of distilled spirits (gin, rum, tequila, vodka, whiskey, etc.)</td>
<td>≈ 40% alcohol</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Adapted from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA). The percent of pure alcohol in beverages varies widely. Read beverage labels to find out how much alcohol is in your drink.

Factors to Consider

The signs of substance use in older adults may be overlooked due to aging or chronic disease. Consider these factors when providing brief interventions.

- Social difficulties like grief/loss, role changes, or social isolation
- Metabolic and physiological changes
- Increased risk of injury/falls
- Medication/drug interactions
- Cognition and memory
- Risk of developing addiction

Lower-Risk Alcohol Use Guidelines

Lower-risk drinking is staying within recommended guidelines for alcohol consumption: Drink no more than three standard drinks per day and no more than seven standard drinks per week.

Avoid drinking when:
- Driving or operating machinery.
- Participating in activities in which you use balance or coordination.

Taking over-the-counter, herbal, and/or prescription medications.
- You have a medical condition that may worsen with alcohol use.

*Approximate percentages represent alcohol drinkers in the U.S. Adapted from the World Health Organization (WHO), 2016.
ASSIST-LITE SCORING AND INTERVENTION GUIDELINES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBSTANCE</th>
<th>LOWER RISK</th>
<th>MODERATE RISK</th>
<th>HIGH RISK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco, cannabis, sedatives, stimulants, opioids</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1–2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol</td>
<td>0–1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3–4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TALKING POINTS

**Introduce yourself.** “Thanks for filling out the form. Would you mind taking a few minutes to talk with me about your use of ______? Before we start, can you tell me a little bit about a day in your life? Where does your use of ______ fit in?”

**Ask about pros and cons.** “Can you help me understand, through your eyes, the good things about using ______? What are some of the not-so-good things?” Then, work with the participant to summarize pros and cons.

**Share scores, risks, and facts.** “I have some information about the impacts of using ______. Is it okay if I share that with you? What do you think?”

**Use the readiness ruler.** “Why did you choose that number and not a lower one?”

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**HOW READY ARE YOU TO MAKE A CHANGE? HOW IMPORTANT IS IT? HOW CONFIDENT ARE YOU?**

Not at all | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 Very

**Summarize the conversation.** “What are some steps that you are willing to take to make a change? What and who will support you in making this change? What challenges might you face?”

**Negotiate an action plan.** Write down goals and next steps. Thank the participant and set a follow-up. Provide warm hand-offs to additional supports and referrals as needed.

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GET SUPPORT

For confidential, 24/7 support and referrals, call the toll-free OASAS HOPEline: 1-877-846-7369 or text HOPENY (467369)

For more information, visit: oasas.ny.gov

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NY Connects can connect older adults, caregivers, and families to local services and resources that support independent living, including home care, transportation, and meals.

**For more information,** visit nyconnects.ny.gov or call 1-800-342-9871.

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NEW YORK STATE Office of Addiction Services and Supports

OASAS. Every Step of the Way.