

# Did you know?

Did you know that drinking alcohol can increase your risk of cancer? By drinking less alcohol, you can lower your risk of several cancers like breast, colorectal, oral, liver, esophageal and laryngeal cancer. The best way to do this is to not drink at all. If you choose to drink and want to reduce your risk of cancer, drink no more than 1 drink per day for women and 2 drinks per day for men.

## Limiting alcohol can help prevent:

- Dementia and stroke
- Cancer
- Depression and anxiety
- High blood pressure
- Liver diseases
- Pancreatitis
- Gastritis
- Social problems (e.g., unemployment, relationship issues)
- Memory problems
- Brain damage
- Hepatitis
- Sexually transmitted infections

## Benefits of cutting down on alcohol

You can expect some great benefits just by cutting back on how much you drink.

- More time
- More money
- Deeper sleep
- More energy
- Better skin
- Better mood
- Better concentration
- Slimmer waistline
- Happier stomach
- Better long-term health

# Where to get help

Alberta Health Services offers a wide range of addiction and mental health services.

For individuals looking for information for someone they care about, or for themselves, the Addiction Helpline and the Mental Health Helpline are available:

**Addiction Helpline** 1-866-332-2322

**Mental Health Helpline** 1-877-303-2642

**Call Health Link at 811**

These helplines are free, confidential and available 24 hours a day.



**For more information, visit [HealthierTogether.ca](http://HealthierTogether.ca) or [ahs.ca](http://ahs.ca)**



Adapted from Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines (2012) with permission from the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse.

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# What to know about

# LOW-RISK DRINKING

Drinking is a personal choice. If you choose to drink, these guidelines can help you decide what's best for you.



# Age matters

## Delay your drinking

Alcohol can harm the way the body and brain develop. Teens should speak with their parents about drinking. If they choose to drink, they should do so under parental guidance; never more than 1 to 2 drinks at a time, and never more than 1 to 2 times per week. They should plan ahead, follow local alcohol laws and consider the Safer Drinking Tips listed.

Youth in their late teens (18/19) to age 24 years should never exceed the daily and weekly limits outlined in Know Your Limits.

## Older adults

As people get older, their bodies process alcohol more slowly so they may become more sensitive to the effects of alcohol. This can place them at increased risk of accidents and falls, and can worsen some health issues.

If you are over 65 and choose to drink, reduce long-term health risks by staying within the daily and weekly limits outlined in Know Your Limits.

## Special occasions

You can reduce your risk of injury and harm by drinking no more than 3 drinks for women and 4 drinks for men on a single occasion. But stay within the weekly limits outlined.

# Know your limits

Low risk is not no risk.  
To have no risk, don't drink.



There is no safe limit of alcohol consumption. But you can reduce your long-term health risks by planning non-drinking days each week, and drinking **no more than:**

**Women**



0 – 2 drinks daily  
10 drinks per week

**Men**



0 – 3 drinks daily  
15 drinks per week

These guidelines are not meant to encourage those who abstain from drinking alcohol to start, or those who drink less than the recommended amounts, to drink more.

## What is a standard drink?



**Beer, cider or cooler**  
341 ml (12 oz) 5% alcohol content

**Wine**  
142 ml (5 oz) 12% alcohol content

**Distilled alcohol (rye, gin, rum, etc.)**  
43 ml (1.5 oz) 40% distilled alcohol content

## When zero's the limit

Do not drink when you are:

- Living with mental/physical health issues
- Taking medicine or other drugs that interact with alcohol
- Pregnant, planning to become pregnant or about to breastfeed
- Doing any dangerous physical activity
- Driving a vehicle or using machinery/tools
- Living with alcohol dependence
- Responsible for the safety of others
- Making important decisions

## Safer drinking tips

- Set limits for yourself and stick to them
- Drink slowly; no more than 2 drinks in 3 hours
- For every drink of alcohol, have one non-alcoholic drink, preferably water
- Eat before and while you are drinking
- You may need to consider lower limits based on your age, body weight, and health problems
- Keep at least a few days a week alcohol free
- Plan to drink in a safe place