



Alcohol Screen



How risky is your drinking?

Alcohol use can affect your health and interfere with certain medications and treatments. Answer the 10 questions below and then turn over to find out how risky your drinking is. First check out the standard drink chart below.

Full Strength Beer 285ml 4.8% Alcohol	Low Strength Beer 425ml 2.7% Alcohol	Pre-mix Spirits 330ml 5% Alcohol	Wine 100ml 11.5% Alcohol	Spirits 30ml 40% Alcohol	Full Strength Beer Can or Stubbie 375ml 4.8% Alcohol

This guide contains examples of **one standard drink**.

A full strength can or stubbie contains **one and a half standard drinks**.

Select from the answers below and place the number that corresponds with your answer in the box on the right side of the question. Try to answer the questions in terms of "standard drinks".

1. How often do you have a drink containing alcohol?

0 Never <i>(go to Qs. 9 & 10)</i>	1 Monthly or less	2 Two to four times a month	3 Two to three times a week	4 Four or more times a week	<input type="text"/>
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2. How many standard drinks do you have on a typical day when you are drinking?

0 One or two	1 Three to four	2 Five or six	3 Seven, eight or nine	4 Ten or more	<input type="text"/>
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3. How often do you have six or more standard drinks on one occasion?

0 Never	1 Less than monthly	2 Monthly	3 Weekly	4 Daily or almost daily	<input type="text"/>
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4. How often during the last year have you found that you were not able to stop drinking once you had started?

0 Never	1 Less than monthly	2 Monthly	3 Weekly	4 Daily or almost daily	<input type="text"/>
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5. How often during the last year have you failed to do what was normally expected from you because of drinking?

0 Never	1 Less than monthly	2 Monthly	3 Weekly	4 Daily or almost daily	<input type="text"/>
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6. How often during the last year have you needed a first drink in the morning to get yourself going after a heavy drinking session?

0 Never	1 Less than monthly	2 Monthly	3 Weekly	4 Daily or almost daily	<input type="text"/>
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7. How often during the last year have you had a feeling of guilt or remorse after drinking?

0 Never	1 Less than monthly	2 Monthly	3 Weekly	4 Daily or almost daily	<input type="text"/>
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8. How often during the last year have you been unable to remember what happened the night before because you had been drinking?

0 Never	1 Less than monthly	2 Monthly	3 Weekly	4 Daily or almost daily	<input type="text"/>
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9. Have you or someone else been injured as a result of your drinking?

0 No	2 Yes but not in the last year	4 Yes, during the last year	<input type="text"/>
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10. Has a relative, a friend, a doctor or another health worker been concerned about your drinking or suggested you cut down?

0 No	2 Yes but not in the last year	4 Yes, during the last year	<input type="text"/>
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Low-risk drinking is part of a healthy lifestyle that includes good diet and regular exercise.

Steps to assess your drinking

- Add up all the numbers in the boxes and record your TOTAL here
- Check your total against the **1. Risk Levels** chart below.
- Compare your drinking with the **2. Low-Risk Guidelines** below.
- Check if you fit into any of the **3. Additional Risks** categories below.
- Have a look at the **4. Tips for Changing Your Drinking** below.
- Check the **5. Take Action** category below.

1. Risk Levels

<i>If your TOTAL alcohol screen is:</i>	<i>Then your risk level is:</i>	<i>And you are advised to:</i>
0 to 7	Low Risk - but...	Check out the low risk guidelines and additional risks to get the right mix.
8 to 15	Risky - your drinking has potential to cause harm...	Consider low risk drinking, your diet and exercise. Try the tips for change.
16 and above	High Risk - likely that you are damaging your health or having problems...	Seriously consider changing your drinking. Talk to your doctor or health professional.

2. Low-Risk Guidelines

Low-risk drinking to reduce the lifetime risk of harm from disease or injury for healthy men and women is:

- on any day no more than 2 standard drinks.

Low-risk drinking to reduce the harm of injury or death on any one occasion of drinking is:

- no more than 4 standard drinks on any one day (on a special occasion, not regular drinking) these drinks should be spread out over several hours;
- have regular alcohol-free days.

For women who are planning to become pregnant, or who are pregnant or breastfeeding, no alcohol is the safest option.

3. Additional Risks

Caution:

- Do you have a health condition made worse by alcohol i.e. diabetes, hepatitis, pancreatitis etc.?
- Do you have heart disease, high blood pressure or are gaining weight?
- Are you on medication?
- Do you suffer from depression, anxiety or PTSD?
- Do you experience mood swings or irritability?
- Do you have trouble sleeping?
- Are you over 65?

Even if you are in the low risk category you may need to drink less if you are in one of the above groups that are more susceptible to the effects of alcohol. Talk to your doctor or other health professional.

Avoid intoxication:

If you are going to drive, operate machinery or engage in sport or other activities requiring skill you should avoid getting drunk and stay under the 0.05 Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) by:

Men: drinking no more than two standard drinks in the first hour and no more than one every hour thereafter

Women: drinking only one standard drink per hour.

4. Tips for changing your drinking

- Don't drink on an empty stomach - eat before and during drinking.
- Choose light beer or other low alcohol drinks.
- Set a limit to your drinking time.
- Start with a juice or soft drink to quench your thirst.
- Drink slowly and don't top up drinks.
- Do other things while drinking - play pool, cards etc.
- Refill your own glass.
- Count your standard drinks.
- Drink at your own place, avoid shouts.
- Have one to two alcohol free days each week.

5. Take Action

If your drinking is risky or high risk and you need more help:

- Get a copy of the self help guide, "Changing The Mix - A Guide to Low-Risk Drinking for the Veteran Community".
- Talk to your doctor or other health professional.
- Talk to a VVCS counsellor - the Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service is available to all veterans and their families.
- Get more information at www.therightmix.gov.au.

Low-risk drinking is part of a healthy lifestyle that includes good diet and regular exercise.