Although alcohol-related deaths are one of the nation’s most preventable causes of death. More than 88,000 people die from alcohol-related deaths each year.

To understand the consequences of drinking, manage consumption, and avoid health problems, it’s important to fully understand what constitutes a standard drink and drinking limits.

In the US, a single drink contains 14 grams of “pure” alcohol. Although the drinks below are different sizes, each one contains the same amount of pure alcohol and counts as a single drink.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drink Type</th>
<th>Alcohol Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12 oz. beer</td>
<td>~ 5% alcohol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-9 oz. malt liquor</td>
<td>~ 7% alcohol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 oz. wine</td>
<td>~ 12% alcohol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 oz. hard liquor</td>
<td>~ 40% alcohol</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Daily Drinking Limits*

- **2 drinks** per day / **14 drinks** per week
  - *Men over 65 should limit drinking to 1 per day*

- **1 drink** per day / **7 drinks** per week
  - *Women over 65 should limit drinking to 1 per day*

### Excessive Drinking

- **15+ drinks** per week

### Binge Drinking

- **5+ drinks** consumed on one occasion

- **8+ drinks** per week

- **4+ drinks** consumed on one occasion

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This material was prepared by Alliant Quality, the quality improvement group of Alliant Health Solutions (AHS), the Medicare Quality Innovation Network - Quality Improvement Organization for Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, North Carolina, and Tennessee, under contract with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The contents presented do not necessarily reflect CMS policy. Publication No. 1250W-AHSQIN-QIO-TD1CC-20-259
Alcohol has been linked to serious health problems, such as:

- Alcohol related dementia
- Adverse drug interactions
- Depression and anxiety
- Self-injurious or dangerous behaviors
- Reduction in medication effectiveness
- Development and worsening of chronic diseases and other serious health problems

Tips to eliminate or reduce alcohol use:

- Connect with a sober community.
- Find a sponsor, mentor or family member to support your efforts.
- Practice harm reduction by decreasing the amount and frequency of alcohol consumption.
- Break the drinking routine by starting a hobby or creating new routines.
- Pledge to live a healthier lifestyle by exercising, eating, and sleeping regularly.

An estimated 15 million people struggle with an alcohol use disorder in the United States, but less than 10% of them receive treatment. Recovery is possible.

Get Help

Alcoholics Anonymous Meeting Locator

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) Treatment Locator

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Treatment Locator

If you believe that you have a problem with alcohol, consult a medical or substance use professional for support before quitting.