

You may have heard that alcohol is good for your heart. What you may not have heard is that:

- The health benefits of alcohol apply mainly to people over the age of 45. A little goes a long way. In most cases, one drink of beer, wine or liquor every other day is enough.
- For most people, more than two drinks a day does more harm than good.
- Women who have more than nine drinks a week have higher rates of cancer and other problems than women who drink less.
- Men who have more than fourteen drinks a week also have higher rates of alcohol-related problems.
- Young people have very low rates of heart disease but very high rates of alcohol-related injuries and death.
- If you want to improve your health, you're better off eating a healthier diet, getting more exercise, and giving up smoking, rather than drinking more or starting to drink.



So bring a little balance into your life.

For advice on alcohol and health talk to your doctor or other health professional, or call 1-800-463-6273 (416-595-6111 in Toronto).

The Low-Risk Drinking Guidelines were developed by a team of medical and social researchers from the University of Toronto and the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health. They have been endorsed by the following organizations:

- Addictions Foundation of Manitoba
- Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission
- Alcohol Policy Network
- Association of Local Public Health Agencies
- Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse
- Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
- College of Family Physicians of Canada
- Ontario Public Health Association

Distributed by:

For the facts on alcohol and health, or to find out about the Low-Risk Drinking Guidelines Campaign, visit www.lrdg.net.



alPHA Association of Local PUBLIC HEALTH Agencies



Centre Addiction and Mental Health
Centre toxicomanie et santé mentale

To order additional copies of this brochure, call 1-800-661-1111 (416-595-6059 in Toronto).

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Low-Risk
Drinking Guidelines
maximize life, minimize risk






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Low-Risk Drinking Guidelines

0	Zero drinks = lowest risk of an alcohol-related problem
2	No more than 2 standard drinks on any one day
9	Women: up to 9 standard drinks a week
14	Men: up to 14 standard drinks a week

1 standard drink = 13.6 grams of alcohol =

wine	spirits	beer
	or 	or 
5 oz/142 ml of wine (12% alcohol)	1.5 oz/43 ml of spirits (40% alcohol)	12 oz/341 ml of regular strength beer (5% alcohol)

Higher alcohol beers and coolers have more alcohol than one standard drink.

- If you don't already drink, don't start for health reasons.
- If you do drink, avoid getting intoxicated or drunk.
- Wait at least one hour between drinks.
- Have something to eat. Drink non-alcoholic beverages, such as water, soft drinks or fruit juice.

The Low-Risk Drinking Guidelines are for people of legal drinking age.

Drink less or not at all if you:

- have health problems such as liver disease or mental illness
- are taking medications such as sedatives, painkillers or sleeping pills
- have a personal or family history of drinking problems
- are pregnant, trying to get pregnant or breastfeeding
- will be operating vehicles such as cars, trucks, motorcycles, boats, snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles or bicycles
- need to be alert. For example... if you will be operating machinery or working with farm implements or dangerous equipment
- will be doing sports or other physical activities where you need to be in control
- are responsible for the safety of others at work or at home
- are told not to drink for legal, medical or other reasons

If you belong to any of these groups, check with your doctor.

Tips for following these Guidelines:

- Know what a standard drink is.
- Keep track of how much you drink - daily and weekly.
- Never drink and drive.
- Don't start drinking for health reasons. To keep your heart healthy, eat better, exercise more and don't smoke.
- Be a responsible host - encourage your guests to follow these guidelines.
- Talk to your kids about alcohol.
- Find out about programs and policies that support low-risk drinking.
- Develop an alcohol policy for your home, workplace, school or community organization.

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