

CANADA'S LOW-RISK ALCOHOL DRINKING GUIDELINES

COMMUNICATIONS TOOLKIT

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START HERE

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT FOR CANADIANS TO BE AWARE OF THE GUIDELINES.

Moderate drinkers might not be aware of the short- and long-term health risks that can result from drinking beyond their limits. Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines were created to provide standardized guidance to help people make informed decisions about their drinking.

This is Canada's first set of national low-risk drinking guidelines. The guidelines — intended for adults aged 25–65 who choose to drink — provide information on how to reduce the risk of alcohol-related harm in both the short and long term.

We invite you to use the resources in this toolkit to partner with the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction (CCSA) to help promote the Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines. By working together we will be:

- Encouraging those who drink to drink sensibly,
- Supporting healthier lifestyles, and
- Promoting a culture of moderation.

CONTACT

GET IN TOUCH

alcohol@ccsa.ca

ABOUT THE TOOLKIT

This toolkit provides you with a variety of resources related to Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines made available to your organization by CCSA at no cost.

Please share these resources within your organization and among your networks:

- Print and distribute posters
- Share the key messages with your online community
- Use the web buttons and banners on your website and link them to the resources to encourage others to download them

You will need an Internet connection to access links and promotional materials included in this toolkit.

You do not need permission to use the materials unless you are making changes to adapt them to your context. Please complete our online copyright permission [form](#) if that is the case.

GET IN TOUCH

For inquiries or assistance in using this toolkit, please contact alcohol@ccsa.ca.

Please let us know how you have used the toolkit.

WHAT'S IN THE TOOLKIT?

Materials included in the toolkit for download:

- Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines
- Web buttons and banners
- Printable posters and brochures
- Fact sheets and infographics
- Social media assets

GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION TO CANADA'S LOW-RISK ALCOHOL DRINKING GUIDELINES

Drinking is a personal choice. These guidelines are designed to help those 25–65 years old who choose to drink to decide when, where, why and how much. It outlines the recommended limits on regular and special occasions, when zero is the limit, safer drinking tips and how much one drink really is.

A standardized set of guidelines provides a consistent, current source of information across Canada to help people make informed choices and moderate their drinking.

HOW TO SPEAK ABOUT CANADA'S LOW-RISK ALCOHOL DRINKING GUIDELINES

The following talking points will assist your organization in promoting and explaining Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines to clients, colleagues, health professionals and your community networks. When promoting the guidelines, it is important to remember that:

- These are low-risk, not no-risk guidelines
- The guidelines set limits, not targets
- They are intended for adults aged 25–65 who choose to drink

The guidelines were developed to raise awareness and educate in a supportive way. Starting a dialogue on a culture of moderation and when to avoid drinking altogether is the first step towards a healthier community.

Over 30 Canadian public health, health professional and industry organizations endorse these national guidelines. When promoting the guidelines to healthcare practitioners, it is useful to provide more detail on the risks associated with alcohol use and chronic disease. CCSA also suggests advice they can provide to patients: see Additional Resources.

Canada's **LOW-RISK ALCOHOL DRINKING GUIDELINES**

Drinking is a personal choice.
If you choose to drink, these
guidelines can help you decide
when, where, why and how.



[Download here](#) ▼

SOCIAL MEDIA

START THE ONLINE CONVERSATION

CCSA has provided a variety of Twitter cards that you can share on your organization's channel. Download and post these images with an accompanying 280 character tweet. Below are a few sample tweets that you can use or feel free to create your own.

We encourage you to follow CCSA on Twitter [@CCSACanada](#) and use the hashtag [#KnowYourLimits](#) when you share these resources.

SAMPLE TWEET 1: What is "a drink"?

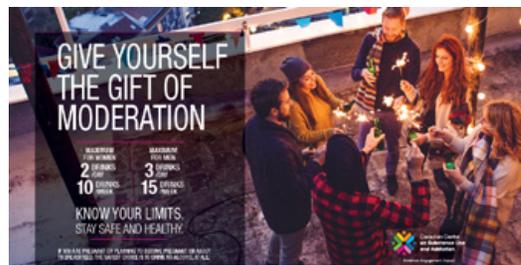
Did you know that a drink size depends on its alcohol content? Take note of how many drinks you already have in your glass. [#KnowYourLimits](#)



Download here ▼

SAMPLE TWEET 2: The gift of moderation

Make this holiday season one to remember by staying within your limits. [#KnowYourLimits](#)



Download here ▼

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

FACT SHEETS AND INFOGRAPHIC

These fact sheets and infographic highlight the statistical evidence behind alcohol use and chronic diseases. These resources concisely explain the guidelines and help healthcare providers start conversations about alcohol use with their patients.

FACT SHEETS

Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines
Frequently Asked Questions

These frequently asked questions (FAQs) were developed to assist organizations to promoting and explaining Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines to clients, colleagues and networks. Although helpful to Canadians, these FAQs are not specifically targeted at the general public.

When promoting the guidelines, it's important to remember that:

- the guidelines are for adults aged 19 and over
- the guidelines are for adults aged 19-65 who choose to drink

As we receive additional questions, we will add them and the corresponding responses to this document. If you have questions that you would like to see addressed, please contact us at info@ccsa.ca.

What are Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines?
The 2015 Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines are intended for adults aged 19-65 years who choose to drink - provide information on how to reduce the risk of alcohol-related harms in both the short and long term.

Why do we need a national set of alcohol drinking guidelines?
Over the past 20 years, there have been four sets of drinking guidelines in Canada: from the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, the Centre for Addiction Research of the University of Toronto, the Centre for Family Psychology of the University of Guelph, and the Canadian Council on Social Development. A national set of guidelines is important to provide consistent, current information across Canada to help people make informed choices and moderate their drinking.

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Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines
Communicating Alcohol-Related Health Risks

This resource was developed to assist healthcare providers in discussing with their clients the risks of several serious illnesses associated with various levels of alcohol consumption.

Table 1. 2 and 3 below - taken from the technical, scientific report that provided the basis for Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines - outline changes in the risk for a selected number of serious alcohol-related diseases based on how many drinks a person consumes on average per day. These estimates were based on an analysis of a comprehensive literature review of scientific studies commissioned and prepared specifically for the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health.

Table 1 summarizes the risks for 12 serious diseases, including seven types of cancer, which apply equally for both men and women under 70 years of age. Of note from the table:

- Drinking just one drink per day increases, by up to 42%, a person's risk of getting any one of the new head conditions identified for yellow. Of these new conditions, a person's risk rises as the number of drinks consumed per day increases.
- Research links the one condition for which there was no significant change in risk with alcohol consumption: "stroke" (drinking level: normal, at three or more drinks per day).
- A person in the 70+ age group is at greater risk of heart disease when drinking up to 3-4 drinks per day, with men taking 5-6 drinks per day and women less than 3 drinks per day.

Table 2. Percentage changes in risk for selected and chronic of premature death from 12 alcohol-related illnesses according to typical daily alcohol intake.

Type of Illness or Disease	Population of All Adults, 19-65	Percentage Increase/Decrease in Risk				
		1 Drink	2 Drinks	3-4 Drinks	5-6 Drinks	+ 6 Drinks
Ischemic heart disease	1.9 (1,000)	+12	+22	+32	+42	+52
Stroke	1.8 (200)	+12	+22	+32	+42	+52
Heart failure	1.8 (100)	+12	+22	+32	+42	+52
Coronary artery disease	1.8 (100)	+12	+22	+32	+42	+52
Diabetes	1.8 (100)	+12	+22	+32	+42	+52
Hypertension	1.8 (100)	+12	+22	+32	+42	+52
Obesity	1.8 (100)	+12	+22	+32	+42	+52
Depression	1.8 (100)	+12	+22	+32	+42	+52
Alcohol use disorder	1.8 (100)	+12	+22	+32	+42	+52
Low birth weight	1.8 (100)	0	+22	+32	+42	+52

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Guidelines for Healthcare Providers to Promote Low-Risk Drinking Among Patients

This version of Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines are intended to encourage people who choose to abstain (for cultural, spiritual or other reasons) to drink, or are they intended to encourage people to start drinking to achieve health benefits. People of low body weight or who are not accustomed to alcohol are advised to consume below the maximum limits.

Note: Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines are not intended to encourage people who choose to abstain (for cultural, spiritual or other reasons) to drink, or are they intended to encourage people to start drinking to achieve health benefits. People of low body weight or who are not accustomed to alcohol are advised to consume below the maximum limits.

For these guidelines, "a drink" means:

- Beer (12 oz)
- Cider (12 oz)
- Wine (5 oz)
- Distilled Alcohol (1.5 oz)

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INFOGRAPHIC

CHRONIC ILLNESS AND ALCOHOL

The relationship between alcohol and chronic illness is complex. Following Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines can help support healthy lifestyles.

The chart shows how drinking alcohol may increase or decrease the risk of developing certain chronic illnesses for men and women.

While drinking may provide health benefits for certain groups of people, it may also increase your overall health risks.

The risks of drinking depend on:

- AGE
- GENDER
- HEALTH
- AMOUNT OF ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION
- FAMILY HISTORY

Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines
Reduce your long term health risks by drinking no more than:

- 3 DRINKS/DAY 15/WEEK for men
- 2 DRINKS/DAY 10/WEEK for women

For these guidelines, "a drink" means:

- Beer (12 oz)
- Cider (12 oz)
- Wine (5 oz)
- Distilled Alcohol (1.5 oz)

If taking medication, check the warnings on the packaging and talk to your doctor or pharmacist to see if it is safe to drink while being treated. Alcohol can make medicine less effective or too strong, causing bad reactions.

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PROMOTIONAL ASSETS

ADS AND POSTERS

Here are resources in a variety of formats to communicate the key messaging from the guidelines. They are good conversation starters, and remind those who drink on various occasions to stay within their limits. You can download the web button and banner to encourage those who visit your website to learn more about the guidelines.

ADS AND POSTERS

CANADA'S LOW-RISK ALCOHOL DRINKING GUIDELINES

Drinking is a personal choice. If you choose to drink, these guidelines can help you decide when, where, why and how.

For these guidelines, "a drink" means:

- Beer (any amount)
- Cider/ Cider* (any amount)
- Wine (150 mL / 5 oz)
- Distilled Alcohol (40-50% alc/vol)

YOUR LIMITS
Reduce your long-term health risks by drinking no more than:

- 10 drinks a week for women, with no more than 2 drinks in a day, most days
- 15 drinks a week for men, with no more than 3 drinks in a day, most days

SPECIAL OCCASIONS
Reduce your risk of injury and harm by drinking no more than 3 drinks for women or 4 drinks for men on any single occasion. Don't drink in a single occasion. Stay within the weekly limits outlined above in **your limits**.

SAFER DRINKING TIPS

- Get limits for yourself and stick to them.
- Don't drink when you're under the age of 18.
- For every drink of alcohol, there are non-alcoholic drinks.
- Get better and safer you are drinking.
- Always consider your age, body weight and health problems that might impact your limits.
- While drinking may provide health benefits for some groups of people, it's not easy to drink or increase your drinking for health benefits.

WHEN ZERO'S THE LIMIT

- Don't drink when you are driving a vehicle or using machinery and tools.
- Using medicine or other drugs that interact with alcohol.
- Using alcohol to cope with health problems.
- Being with someone pregnant or planning to be pregnant.
- Being responsible for the safety of others.
- Making important decisions.

PREGNANT? ZERO IS SAFEST

If you're pregnant or planning to become pregnant, or about to, limit your alcohol intake to zero.

DELAY YOUR DRINKING

Don't drink when you're under the age of 18.

KNOW YOUR LIMITS. STAY SAFE AND HEALTHY.

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MODERATION WILL KEEP YOU COOL ALL SUMMER

Know your limits. Stay safe and healthy.

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Have "FOMO?"

Create nights you'll remember forever... and the next morning.

Know your limits. Stay safe and healthy.

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Download here ▼

DRINK IN MODERATION AND STILL BE MERRY

Know your limits. Stay safe and healthy.

Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction

Download here ▼

WEB BUTTON AND BANNER

A STANDARD DRINK MAY BE LESS THAN YOU THINK.

LEARN FROM THE GUIDELINES ▶

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728x90 ▼

A STANDARD DRINK MAY BE LESS THAN YOU THINK.

LEARN FROM THE GUIDELINES ▶

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