

## ALCOHOL LIMITS & LEVELS

(0:01 – Title slide; 0:03 – male nurse wearing mask medically examining pregnant female wearing mask) Alcohol use is very common in the United States; however, only one in six adults reports ever talking with their healthcare professional about their drinking.

(0:12 – various alcoholic beverages) A shared understanding of what constitutes a standard drink helps to accurately assess whether a person is consuming alcohol at an excessive level.

(0:23 – Text slide) The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism defines a standard drink as “any drink that contains approximately 14 grams (which is about 0.6 fluid ounces) of pure alcohol.” This is approximately the amount contained (0:40 – graphic of each drink and its alcohol content appears as it is mentioned)

12 ounces of beer or hard seltzers (5% alcohol content),

8 ounces of malt liquor (7% alcohol content),

5 ounces of wine (12% alcohol content), or

1.5 ounces of 80-proof distilled spirits or liquor (40% alcohol content).

(1:04 – 4 shots with various fruits and chocolates in them) The percentage of pure alcohol, expressed here as alcohol by volume, varies within and across beverage types. Although the standard drink amounts are helpful for following health guidelines, they may not reflect customary serving sizes.

(1:17 – woman in medical exam with female physician) When talking with people of childbearing age about their alcohol use, it is helpful to understand the different levels of alcohol use (1:28 – Drinker's Pyramid) as illustrated in the Drinker's Pyramid.

At the bottom of the pyramid are abstainers and moderate drinkers. Approximately 71% of the U.S. adult population falls into this category. Even those who drink moderately benefit from a reminder of drinking levels and encouragement to abstain from alcohol when they are pregnant. They might also consider abstaining while breastfeeding or in situations such as driving a motor vehicle or operating heavy machinery.

Most US adults who drink excessively do not have an alcohol use disorder. Exceeding recommended drinking levels can put themselves and others at risk of immediate and long-term harms. Everyone who drinks, not just those who drink excessively, can benefit from (2:12 – male nurse medically examining man) conversations with their healthcare provider about the health consequences of alcohol use. Brief interventions introduce techniques (2:20 – female physician wearing mask holding tablet during medical exam with man wearing mask) for reducing the quantity and frequency of drinking. (2:25 – Drinker's Pyramid) The remaining 4% of the U.S. adult population drinks at levels that suggest they may be at risk for an alcohol use disorder and would benefit from a referral to treatment by their healthcare provider.

Persons at risk of an alcohol use disorder may have already experienced health or other consequences at home, work, school, or through contact with the criminal justice system, but they continue to drink at excessive levels.

Most have developed tolerance to alcohol, needing to drink more and more to feel high or “buzzed,” and a loss of control over their drinking, including the inability to stop drinking once they start, and spending more time drinking or recovering from drinking episodes than intended. Healthcare providers can help by connecting patients to treatment resources within their healthcare organization or in their communities.

(3:10 – Text slide) Excessive drinking includes binge drinking, heavy drinking, and any drinking by pregnant people or people younger than age 21. Binge drinking is defined as consuming (3:22 – number of drinks under picture of woman and number of drinks under picture of man) four or more drinks during a single occasion for women and five or more drinks during a single occasion for men. Heavy drinking is defined as consuming eight or more drinks per week for women and 15 or more drinks per week for men.