

# What is your drinking pattern?

The questionnaire related to alcohol dependence on the following page is based on the questions developed by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), as part of the criteria for alcohol dependence outlined in DSM-IV.<sup>3,9</sup>



Scan to visit  
the NIH website

**References:** 1. National Cancer Institute (NCI). Definition of alcohol dependence. <https://www.cancer.gov/publications/dictionaries/cancer-terms/def/alcohol-dependence>. Accessed October 7, 2021. 2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR). Deaths and years of potential life lost from excessive alcohol use—United States, 2011–2015. <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6939a6.htm>. Updated October 2, 2020. 3. National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA). Alcohol use disorder: a comparison between DSM-IV and DSM-5. <https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/brochures-and-fact-sheets/alcohol-use-disorder-comparison-between-dsm>. Updated April 2021. 4. National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA). Treatment for alcohol problems: finding and getting help. <https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/brochures-and-fact-sheets/treatment-alcohol-problems-finding-and-getting-help>. 5. National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) NH. Psychosocial treatments. <https://www.nami.org/About-Mental-Illness/Treatments>. 6. Alcohol.org. Alcohol Support Groups & Aftercare Programs. <https://www.alcohol.org/aftercare/support-groups/>. Updated October 14, 2021. 7. National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA). Surgeon General Issues Landmark Report on Alcohol, Drugs and Health. <https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/news-events/news-noteworthy/surgeon-general-issues-landmark-report-alcohol-drugs-and-health>. Published November 17, 2016. 8. Pollard M, Tucker J, Green H. Changes in adult alcohol use and consequences during the COVID-19 pandemic in the US. *JAMA Netw Open*. 2020;3(9):e202942. doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2020.22942. 9. American Psychiatric Association (APA). DSM-5: frequently asked questions. <https://www.psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/practice/dsm/feedback-and-questions/frequently-asked-questions>.

## Questionnaire

Check the box if your answer is yes.

- ☐ Have you had to drink much more than you once did to get the effect you want? Or found that your usual number of drinks had much less effect than before?
- ☐ When the effects of alcohol were wearing off, did you experience withdrawal symptoms, such as trouble sleeping, shakiness, restlessness, nausea, sweating, a racing heart, or a seizure? Or did you sense things that weren't there?
- ☐ Have you had times when you ended up drinking more, or longer, than you intended?
- ☐ Have you tried to cut down or stop drinking, but couldn't, on more than one occasion?
- ☐ Have you spent a lot of time drinking? Or being sick or getting over other aftereffects?
- ☐ Have you given up or cut back on activities that were important or interesting to you, or gave you pleasure, in order to drink?
- ☐ Have you continued to drink even though it was making you feel depressed or anxious or adding to another health problem? Or after having had a memory blackout?

This questionnaire is not a medical diagnosis. Discuss your responses with your healthcare provider before taking any action related to your health.

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# Is it time to rethink your relationship with alcohol?



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# What is alcohol dependence?

Alcohol dependence is a chronic disease in which a person craves drinks that contain alcohol and is unable to control their drinking. A person with this disease also needs to drink greater amounts to get the same effect and has withdrawal symptoms after stopping alcohol use. Alcohol dependence affects physical and mental health, and can cause problems with family, friends, and work.<sup>1</sup>



**Excessive drinking is a leading cause of preventable death in the United States<sup>2</sup>**

Alcohol dependence is diagnosed using criteria outlined in DSM-IV, the handbook used by healthcare providers to diagnose brain disorders. More recently, with the release of DSM-5, healthcare providers have started using the term alcohol use disorder (AUD). While there is a lot of overlap between alcohol dependence and AUD, there are also some important differences. Learn more about the symptoms and criteria at the NIH website or talk to your healthcare provider.<sup>3</sup>



## Help along the way

If you are rethinking your relationship with alcohol, talk to your healthcare provider about your symptoms. If you are diagnosed with alcohol dependence, treatment could include one or a combination of the following:

### **BEHAVIORAL THERAPY:**

Also known as alcohol counseling, behavioral therapy involves working with your healthcare provider to identify and help modify behaviors that cause problems with drinking.<sup>4</sup>

### **PSYCHOSOCIAL TREATMENTS**

#### **(INTERVENTIONS):**

Include structured counseling, motivational enhancement, case management, care-coordination, psychotherapy, and relapse prevention.<sup>5</sup>

#### **SUPPORT GROUPS:**

Meetings that range from just a few people in a rehab facility, small groups in a community center, or groups assembled virtually as part of a larger organization.<sup>6</sup>

#### **MEDICATION:**

Prescribed by a healthcare provider, there are medications approved to help treat alcohol dependence.<sup>4</sup>

Talk with your healthcare provider about whether treatment is right for you.

## Many people are living with alcohol dependence

It's not a personal or moral failing; it's a chronic disease that may make it hard to control your drinking and can affect your physical and mental health, as well as cause problems with family, friends, and work.<sup>7</sup>



**Since the start of the pandemic, monthly drinking days have increased 14% over baseline for American adults<sup>8</sup>**

How you feel about your drinking may be complicated. Alcohol is a widely accepted part of our culture, in good times and bad. But if the consequences of your drinking are piling up, if you're finding it hard to stop, or if drinking is replacing other activities you used to enjoy, it may be time to talk to your healthcare provider to learn more about alcohol dependence.



**Watch personal stories**

**Disclaimer:** The information provided in this brochure is not medical advice and cannot be used to diagnose or treat any medical conditions. If you have questions, please talk to your healthcare provider.

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