

U.S. Adult Drinking Patterns

Nearly 3 in 10 U.S. adults engage in at-risk drinking patterns³ and thus would benefit from advice to cut down or a referral for further evaluation. During a brief intervention, you can use this chart to show that (1) most people abstain or drink within the recommended limits and (2) the prevalence of alcohol use disorders rises with heavier drinking. Though a wise first step, cutting to within the limits is not risk free, since motor vehicle crashes and other problems can occur at lower drinking levels.

WHAT IS YOUR DRINKING PATTERN?	HOW COMMON IS THIS PATTERN?	HOW COMMON ARE ALCOHOL DISORDERS WITH THIS PATTERN?
<p>Based on the following limits—number of drinks: On any DAY—Never more than 4 (men) or 3 (women) – and – In a typical WEEK—No more than 14 (men) or 7 (women)</p>	<p>Percentage of U.S. adults aged 18 or older*</p>	<p>Combined prevalence of alcohol abuse and dependence**</p>
<p>Never exceed the daily or weekly limits (2 out of 3 people in this group abstain or drink fewer than 12 drinks a year)</p>	 <p>72%</p>	<p>less than 1 in 100</p>
<p>Exceed only the daily limit (More than 8 out of 10 in this group exceed the daily limit less than once a week)</p>	 <p>16%</p>	<p>1 in 5</p>
<p>Exceed both daily and weekly limits (8 out of 10 in this group exceed the daily limit once a week or more)</p>	 <p>10%</p>	<p>almost 1 in 2</p>

* Not included in the chart, for simplicity, are the 2 percent of U.S. adults who exceed *only* the weekly limits. The combined prevalence of alcohol use disorders in this group is 8 percent.