

Canada's low-risk drinking guidelines

For the first time ever, Canada has one set of low-risk alcohol drinking guidelines for the entire country, supported by federal, provincial and territorial health ministers as well as many respected Canadian organizations.

Developed for Canadians of legal drinking age who choose to drink alcohol, these guidelines are informed by the most recent and best available scientific research and evidence. Their aim is to provide consistent information to help Canadians moderate their

alcohol consumption and reduce immediate and long-term alcohol-related harm.

If all Canadian drinkers consumed alcohol within these guidelines, alcohol-related deaths would be reduced by an estimated 4,600 per year.*

* Source: *Alcohol and Health in Canada: A Summary of Evidence and Guidelines for Low-Risk Drinking*

Guideline 1 • 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 a day most days
- » 15 drinks a week for men, with no more than 3 drinks a day most days

Plan non-drinking days every week to avoid developing a habit.

Guideline 2 • 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.

Plan to drink in a safe environment. Stay within the weekly limits outlined above.



Guideline 3 • When zero's the limit

Do not drink when you are:

- » driving a vehicle or using machinery and tools
- » taking medicine or other drugs that interact with alcohol
- » doing any kind of dangerous physical activity
- » living with mental or physical health problems
- » living with alcohol dependence
- » pregnant or planning to be pregnant
- » responsible for the safety of others
- » making important decisions

Guideline 4 • Pregnant? Zero is safest

If you are pregnant or planning to become pregnant, or about to breastfeed, the safest choice is to drink no alcohol at all.

Guideline 5 • Delay your drinking

If you are a child or youth, you should delay drinking until your late teens. Talk with your parents about drinking. Alcohol can harm the way your brain and body develop.

If you are drinking, plan ahead, follow local alcohol laws and stay within the limits outlined in Guideline 1.

Low-risk drinking promotes a culture of moderation and supports healthy lifestyles.

Safer drinking tips

- » Set limits for yourself and stick to them.
- » Drink slowly. Have no more than 2 drinks in any 3 hours.
- » For every drink of alcohol, have one non-alcoholic drink.
- » Eat before and while you are drinking.
- » Always consider your age, body weight and health problems that might suggest lower limits.
- » While drinking may provide health benefits for certain groups of people, do not start to drink or increase your drinking for health benefits.



The Prevention Conversation

It's time to talk about alcohol and pregnancy