

Alcohol use assessment

Information for women planning pregnancy, pregnant and breastfeeding women

We would like to assess how the amount of alcohol you drink may be affecting your health and well-being, and that of your baby. The aim of this survey is to find out about your use of alcohol:

Pre-pregnancy—in the 3 months before you became pregnant and

Current situation—current drinking (if you are pregnant or breastfeeding).

What is a standard drink?



Light beer
2.7% alc/vol.
Large glass 425mL
(schooner/pint)



Full-strength beer
4.9% alc/vol
Medium glass
285mL (middy/pot)



Wine
12% alc/vol
Glass 100 mL



Spirits
40% alc/vol
Nip 30 mL



Port/sherry
20% alc/vol
Glass 60 mL

Note

- Serves of wine at most restaurants and bars are equivalent to almost 2 standard drinks
- Two 375mL cans of full strength beer = 3 standard drinks

For each question please tick one option for: your pre-pregnancy situation
 your current situation

1 How often did/do you have a drink containing alcohol?

	Never	Monthly or less	2 to 4 times a month	2 to 3 times a week	4 or more times a week	Score
pre-pregnancy	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/>
current situation	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/>

2 How many standard drinks did/do you have on a typical day when drinking?

	1 or 2	3 or 4	5 or 6	7 to 9	10 or more	Score
pre-pregnancy	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/>
current situation	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/>

3 How often did/do you have 6 or more drinks on one occasion?

	Never	Less than monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily or almost daily	Score
pre-pregnancy	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/>
current situation	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/>

AUDIT-C adapted from Bush K, et al. Arch Intern Med. 1998; 158: 1789-1795.

Questions 1, 2 and 3 (combined score): Pre-pregnancy score

Questions 1, 2 and 3 (combined score): Current score

Total Qs 1,2,3



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Scoring and interpreting AUDIT-C

Add the scores (shown in boxes) for each of the three questions for a total score out of 12 for both the woman's pre-pregnancy situation and her current situation.

Pre-pregnant, pregnant or breastfeeding woman

- 0–3 Low risk drinking
- 4–5 Risk depends on other factors*
- ≥ 6 Risky or high-risk drinking*

Baby

There is no evidence for a safe level of drinking during pregnancy and breastfeeding

Pre-pregnancy

- ▶ Explain personal risk level associated with current alcohol consumption.
- ▶ Explain risk to baby if alcohol consumption continues following conception.
- ▶ Reinforce benefits of stopping at any stage*.
- ▶ Offer assistance to stop before conception occurs.
- ▶ Provide written information.

All pregnant and breastfeeding women

- ▶ Explain risk level associated with current alcohol consumption.
- ▶ Reinforce that episodes of drinking above guideline levels considerably increases the risk to the unborn baby, including the risk of miscarriage, low birth weight, cognitive defects and congenital abnormalities.
- ▶ Reinforce benefits of stopping at any stage*.
- ▶ Offer assistance to stop during pregnancy if low-risk drinking identified.
- ▶ Provide written information or referral, depending on identified level of risk.

0–3 Low-risk drinking

- ▶ May indicate risk for baby's health.
- ▶ Reinforce that there is no safe level of drinking whilst pregnant.
- ▶ Advise the woman to continue limiting her drinking and encourage/support her to stop altogether while pregnant.
- ▶ Provide specific advice regarding timing of alcohol consumption if breastfeeding.

4–5 Risky drinking

- ▶ May indicate risk for baby's health.
- ▶ May indicate risky drinking for woman's health if other risk factors are present**.
- ▶ If other risk factors are present perform full AUDIT*.
- ▶ Reinforce benefits of stopping at any stage*.
- ▶ Discuss potential effects of current drinking levels, including health concerns for both the woman and her baby.
- ▶ Ask the woman how she feels about cutting down or stopping. If yes:
 - ▶ ask how confident she is about succeeding
 - ▶ ask if she would like some assistance
 - ▶ offer treatment or referral.

≥ 6 High-risk drinking

- ▶ May indicate risk for baby's health.
- ▶ Perform full AUDIT*.
- ▶ Discuss potential effects of current drinking levels, including health concerns for both the woman and her baby.
- ▶ Ask the woman how she feels about cutting down or stopping. If yes:
 - ▶ ask how confident she is about succeeding
 - ▶ ask if she would like some assistance
 - ▶ offer treatment or referral.

* **If you suspect alcohol dependency** the Alcohol and Pregnancy Lifescript is not appropriate as the woman likely requires specialist treatment. There is a risk to the foetus from sudden alcohol withdrawal. The optimal care is referral to a specialised treatment centre.

****Other risk factors** include chronic medical conditions, heart disease, medications that interact with alcohol and mental health problems.

Useful resources National Health and Medical Research Council. *Australian Alcohol Guidelines: Health Risks and Benefits*. Canberra: NHMRC 2001. (Available at www.alcoholguidelines.gov.au/resources.htm)
Shand F, Gates J. *Treating Alcohol Problems: Guidelines for General Practitioners*. Canberra: Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing; 2003. (Available at www.health.gov.au)

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