

Resources to Support Your Conversations

Alcohol and Health in Canada: A Summary of Evidence and Guidelines for Low-Risk Drinking provides the research behind the Guidelines. www.ccsa.ca/Resource%20Library/2011-Summary-of-Evidence-and-Guidelines-for-Low-Risk%20Drinking-en.pdf

Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines can help guide your conversations. This brochure advises all women to drink no more than 10 standard drinks/week and no more than 2/day. If your patient is pregnant or might become pregnant, ZERO alcohol is recommended. www.ccsa.ca/Resource%20Library/2012-Canada-Low-Risk-Alcohol-Drinking-Guidelines-Brochure-en.pdf

Guidelines for Healthcare Providers to Promote Low-Risk Drinking Among Patients provides 5 simple guidelines for medical practitioners. www.ccsa.ca/Resource%20Library/2012-Guidelines-For-Healthcare-Providers-to-Promote-Low-Risk-Drinking-Among-Patients-en.pdf

Pregnancy & Alcohol: A Doctor's Advice discusses risks of alcohol on the fetus and provides advice for reducing exposure. <http://skprevention.ca/resource-catalogue/alcohol/pregnancy-and-alcohol-a-doctors-advice/>

Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral: A Clinical Guide can support your decisions about where to focus your attention and what services you might offer. www.sbir-diba.ca

T-ACE Questionnaire can be used with every patient to assess risky drinking. www.beststart.org/resources/alc_reduction/pdf/DR_alcohol_08.pdf

Contact the Saskatchewan Prevention Institute for information about Motivational Interviewing training.

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Which woman drinks alcohol at a RISKY LEVEL?



You can't tell by looking. **ASKING** is the only way to find out.

Use a Motivational Interviewing approach to ask all women of childbearing age about their alcohol use.
Help prevent alcohol-exposed pregnancies.

Motivational Interviewing (MI) is a brief, evidence-based, non-judgemental approach for talking with a person about change. “MI is about arranging conversations so that people talk themselves into change, based on their own values and interests.”

(Miller, W.R. & Rollnick, S., *Motivational Interviewing: Helping People Change*, 2013, p. 4).

How to Use Motivational Interviewing to ASK Women About Alcohol Use

Normalize the conversation

“I ask all patients about alcohol use as part of overall health.”

Ask permission

“If it’s okay with you, I’d like to ask you some questions about your alcohol use.”

Ask enough open-ended questions to get a clear picture of drinking habits/patterns

“How would you describe your drinking in a typical week?”

“Some people drink to socialize, out of habit, or to reduce stress. What are your reasons for drinking?”

Share information with permission

“If it’s alright with you, I’d like to show you Canada’s Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines and see what you think.”

Ask more open-ended questions

“What are your thoughts about your drinking?”

“What reasons do you have to consider changes in your drinking?”

“What changes, if any, might you consider making?”

Give advice and reinforce independence

“What you do about your drinking is your decision. My advice is for you to cut down to reduce health risks.”

“It’s up to you to decide what you do about drinking. My advice is to quit drinking during your pregnancy.”



For a Patient Ready to Change her Drinking Habits:

- Help her set a goal (e.g., stay within Canada’s Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines, cut down, or quit).
- Ask her about strategies she might use for success (e.g., ask partner/friend for support, avoid certain situations, or manage withdrawal symptoms).
- Ask her how she will keep track of her progress (e.g., diary, calendar, an app, or follow-up appointments with you).
- Offer educational material to take home (e.g., *Canada’s Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines*, or *Pregnancy & Alcohol: A Doctor’s Advice*).
- Explore additional services (e.g., counselling, addiction services, or a treatment centre). Provide contact information or make referrals if needed.

****Treatment centres in Saskatchewan prioritize pregnant women.***

For a Patient Not Ready to Change her Drinking Habits:

- Invite future discussions about alcohol use.
“You’re not thinking about changing your drinking at this time. If you decide you would like to look at your drinking in the future, you can always talk with me about it.”

“If it’s okay with you, I will check back in with you at your next appointment.”