

A GUIDE FOR HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

Alcohol Screening and Counseling for Patients with **HEPATITIS**



NYC
Health

For patients with **hepatitis**, any amount of alcohol consumption can have adverse health consequences.

What is one drink?



A 12-oz. glass, bottle or can of beer or ale



A 5-oz. glass of wine, or a 3.5-oz. glass of fortified wine (such as sherry or port)



A 1.5-oz. “shot” of distilled liquor or brandy (straight or in a mixed drink)



Alcohol Screening

At initial and annual visits, screen all patients with hepatitis for alcohol use with the **Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test – Consumption (AUDIT-C)**.

1) How often do you have a drink containing alcohol?

Response	Never	Monthly or less	2 to 4 times a month	2 to 3 times a week	4 or more times a week
SCORE	0	1	2	3	4

2) How many standard drinks containing alcohol do you have on a day when you drink?

Response	1 or 2 drinks	3 or 4 drinks	5 or 6 drinks	7, 8 or 9 drinks	10 or more drinks
SCORE	0	1	2	3	4

3) How often do you have six or more drinks on one occasion?

Response	Never	Less than monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily or almost daily
SCORE	0	1	2	3	4

After completing the screening, add the scores for questions 1 through 3.

SCORE RANGE	NEXT STEPS
Women: 1-2, Men: 1-3	Provide alcohol counseling messages.
Women: 3 or more Men: 4 or more	Provide alcohol counseling messages. Complete full AUDIT screening according to Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) protocol. Visit samhsa.gov/sbirt for guidance.

Alcohol Counseling

1) Review screening results.

- “You answered some questions about alcohol use. Can we discuss the results?”

2) Explore the patient's reasons for drinking and any barriers to reduction.

- “Help me understand, through your eyes, the pros and cons of drinking alcohol.”

3) Ask for permission to provide counseling messages.

- “Drinking alcohol when you have hepatitis increases your risk of developing fibrosis, liver disease and liver cancer.”
“It is safest for your health not to drink at all. However, if you are not able to stop drinking completely, reducing the amount of alcohol you drink can still help protect your liver.”

4) Determine the patient's current stage of change.

- “On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being not ready at all and 10 being completely ready, how ready are you to change your alcohol use?”

“You chose _____. That's great. That means you are _____% ready to make a change.”

“Why did you choose that number?”

If the patient is not ready to reduce alcohol use, restate your concern about their health and reaffirm your willingness to help when they are ready.

5) Help the patient develop an action plan.

“What are steps that will work for you to reduce your alcohol use?”

“What support do you have to help you make the change?”

“Those are great ideas! Let’s write down your action plan.”

6) Provide resources.

“I have resources that people sometimes find helpful. Would you like to hear about them?”

- Visit niaaa.nih.gov to find tips about cutting down to share with patients.
- Review some of the tips for cutting down listed in the “Alcohol and Hepatitis” patient card.
- Refer patients to the NYC Liver Health app.

Adapted from the Brief Negotiated Interview, Boston University School of Public Health, The BNI-ART Institute, bu.edu/bniart

CREATE AN ACTION PLAN

What?

Example: I will stop drinking or limit myself to one drink a month.

How?

Example: I will drink seltzer water instead of beer at social events.

When?

Example: I will start the next time I am out with my friends.

For help or treatment options, speak with your health care provider or call 311.

Call 311 to order **free** “**Alcohol and Hepatitis**” patient cards, which help your patients make a plan to reduce drinking.

Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) is reimbursable under Medicaid, Medicare and private insurance. To learn more, visit [samhsa.gov/sbirt](https://www.samhsa.gov/sbirt).



Alcohol increases the risk of developing fibrosis, cirrhosis and liver cancer, but many patients are not screened or effectively counseled on the risks of alcohol or how to reduce drinking.

Screening and counseling can be quick and effective!



The NYC Health Department offers **training in Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT)**, as well as electronic health record instruction, technical assistance and implementation support. Visit nyc.gov/health and search for **SBIRT** for more information.

