



Alcohol Brief Intervention Initiative Pre-Reading List

Australian Guidelines to Reduce Health Risks from Drinking Alcohol: Frequently Asked Questions 2009. <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/file/1646/download?token=pbOC6GL8>

Brief interventions for alcohol and other drug use. Australian Prescriber, 2018.
<https://www.nps.org.au/australian-prescriber/articles/brief-interventions-for-alcohol-and-other-drug-use>

Trends in alcohol use and health related harms in NSW. Report of the Chief Health Officer 2016.
<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/hsnsw/Publications/chief-health-officers-report-2016.pdf>

Alcohol and Short-Term Harm. Alcoholthinkagain. Page last updated: 22 November 2019
<https://alcoholthinkagain.com.au/Alcohol-Your-Health/Alcohol-and-Short-Term-Harm>

Key terms used in the 'Guidelines for the Treatment of Alcohol Problems 2009'

For the purposes of these guidelines, the following definitions are used:

Risk – a person's risk of experiencing an adverse health outcome is the probability of the person developing that outcome in a specified time period

Lifetime risk – the accumulated risk from drinking either on many drinking occasions, or on a regular (eg daily) basis over a lifetime. Lifetime risk of death is a common outcome used for measuring risk from exposures to hazardous substances

Relative risk – the risk of harm in drinkers relative to the risk of harm in non-drinkers. Note that the relative risk on its own does not give any information about the absolute risk of harm

Absolute risk – the actual risk of injury or disease from drinking

Harm – adverse health outcomes; in this context harm includes disease and/or injury resulting from consumption of alcohol

Standard drink – the Australian standard drink contains 10g of alcohol (equivalent to 12.5 mL of pure alcohol)

Drinking occasion/single occasion – a sequence of drinks taken without the blood alcohol concentration reaching zero in between. This might include a drink at home over dinner, or at a specific event, such as a party, and can include drinking spread across more than one context or venue

Regular drinking – repeated drinking occasions over a period of time – eg drinking daily, or every weekend, over many years

Harmful drinking – drinking at levels that are likely to cause significant injury or ill health

Immediate effects – the effects of drinking either during or after an occasion of drinking, lasting until the blood alcohol concentration returns to zero

Cumulative effects – the effects of many drinking occasions over time.



A number of well-known terms are difficult to accurately define or are pejorative and are avoided wherever possible in the guidelines. In particular, levels of drinking are defined in many different ways and are often difficult to quantify. However, these terms may be mentioned in the literature. These include:

- binge-drinking
- risky drinking
- heavy drinking
- problem drinking

Optional Reading: [Guidelines for the Treatment of Alcohol Problems 2009](#). These guidelines are under review.