



## Alcohol: Strategies to cut down on drinking

### Strategies to cut down on drinking

- ▶ Avoid drinking games.
- ▶ Space your drinks over time.
- ▶ Alternate drinking non-alcoholic (water or soda) and alcoholic drinks.
- ▶ Set a drinking limit before you start (i.e. 1 drink an hour or 1 – 2 drinks per day).
- ▶ Keep count of the amount of drinks you've drank.
- ▶ Spend more time with friends who don't drink.
- ▶ Go out later and bring less money.
- ▶ Quench your thirst with non-alcoholic drinks before having an alcoholic drink.
- ▶ Avoid salty snacks when you are drinking.
- ▶ Eat before drinking. It will make you feel more full and then you will drink less.
- ▶ Try to take small sips of your drink, avoid gulping, drink slowly.
- ▶ Dilute your drinks, (i.e. add soda to wine and mixers to spirits).
- ▶ Take a break of one hour between drinks.
- ▶ Involve yourself in Non-drinking activities

### Learn how to say NO:

- ▶ You do not have to drink when other people drink.
- ▶ You do not have to take a drink that is given to you.
- ▶ Practice ways to say no politely (i.e. tell people you feel better when you drink less.)
- ▶ Stay away from people who give you a hard time about not drinking

### Watch out for Temptations:

- ▶ Watch out for people, places or times that make you drink, even if you do not want to.
- ▶ Stay away from people who drink a lot or bars where you used to go.
- ▶ Plan ahead of time what you will do to avoid drinking when you are tempted.
- ▶ Do not drink when you are angry or upset or have a bad day.

### Difficult Situations:

#### **If you have the habit of going to bars after work or have the habit of meeting your friends there;**

- ▶ INSTEAD: try to organize a different social activity: going to see a film, or going to a gym or a park

#### **If you drink mainly at night;**

- ▶ INSTEAD: try to keep yourself busy, go to places where you cannot drink, like the cinema

#### **If you drink when you are alone;**

- ▶ INSTEAD: reduce the amount of time that you spend alone: join a club or a support group or increase time doing activities with family members

#### **If you drink when you are stressed;**

- ▶ INSTEAD: learn relaxation techniques or engage in relaxing activities, like gardening



## Alcohol: How to set limits

**If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation. Moderation means:**

- ▶ **For men:** no more than two drinks per day.
- ▶ **For women:** no more than one drink per day.

**A person may be at risk for alcohol-related problems if alcohol consumption is:**

- ▶ Men: greater than 14 drinks per week, or greater than 4 drinks per day.
- ▶ Women: greater than 7 drinks per week, or greater than 3 drinks per day.

### A Moderate Drinker...

- ▶ considers an occasional drink to be a small, though enjoyable, part of life.
- ▶ has hobbies, interests, and other ways to relax and enjoy life that do not involve alcohol.
- ▶ usually has friends who are moderate drinkers or nondrinkers.
- ▶ generally has something to eat before, during, or soon after drinking.
- ▶ usually does not drink for longer than an hour or two on any particular occasion.
- ▶ usually does not drink faster than one drink per half-hour.
- ▶ feels comfortable with his or her use of alcohol (never drinks secretly and does not spend a lot of time thinking about drinking or planning to drink).

### Some Reasons to Cut Down on Drinking...

- ▶ To consume fewer empty calories.
- ▶ To sleep better.
- ▶ To be independent (able to legally drive your vehicle).
- ▶ To feel better (no more hang-overs).
- ▶ To save money.
- ▶ To be happier (alcohol is a depressant).
- ▶ To participate more in activities that are not associated with drinking.



### Tips for **SLOWER** drinking

- ▶ **S**mall drinks, i.e. a small glass or bottle instead of a pint. A single instead of a double.
- ▶ **L**ease your glass down between sips, and leave it empty for a while before getting another.
- ▶ **O**ccupy yourself. Play pool, music, dance, chat.
- ▶ **W**hy stick to water to break up your alcoholic drinks? Try alcohol-free beers, wines, cocktails. Very effective for getting people off your case too.
- ▶ **E**at before and while you drink.
- ▶ **R**ounds should be avoided. If it's too awkward, then buy yourself a water when it's your turn.