

Understanding Liver Disease and Alcohol Consumption

Please watch the video *Understanding Liver Disease and Alcohol Consumption* (4:04). After watching the video, please spend some time answering the questions in the following sections.

Calculation of Daily/Weekly Standard Drinks

Explained in the video, is that liver disease related to alcohol is largely diagnosed based on the amount of alcohol consumed. These amounts are listed below:

Women: more than 1.5 standard drinks per day or 10 standard drinks per week

Men: more than 2 standard drinks per day or 15 standard drinks per week

In Canada, a standard drink is the following:



Use the chart below to determine whether your consumption of standard drinks falls within the criteria for ALD. There is an online calculator that you can use to assist with the calculation of standard drinks. Find it by following this link: [Standard Drink Calculator](#).

	# of drinks per day/week (explain the type and size and/or amount of the drink you would consume)	# of standard drinks per day/week (change the number of drinks consumed per day/week to a number of)	Does this amount meet criteria for ALD? Yes or No?

If any changes need to be made to this resource list, please contact lorraine.stuyt@lhsc.on.ca to inform her of this change. Your assistance in keeping this resource list current is greatly appreciated.

Example:	3-2oz shots (6 oz) of 40% whiskey per day = 42 oz per week	4 standard drinks per day = 28 standard drinks per week	Yes
My amount:			

Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD) Self-Assessment

The video mentions that the word “alcoholic” is no longer used, but that it is possible that some people with Alcohol-related Liver Disease (ALD) have an Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD). AUDs are diagnosed by medical professionals according to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders Fifth Edition (DSM-V) and are sub-classified as mild, moderate or severe. Below are questions that you can ask yourself to gauge whether or not you have (or had) an alcohol use disorder, and how severe it is (or was). Attempt to answer the questions without judgment or blame. The self-assessment is simply a means to develop greater awareness of yourself and your behaviours as they relate to alcohol consumption. Know that not everyone who has a diagnosis of ALD has an AUD (and not everyone with an AUD has ALD). (Note that the self-assessment is written for those who are still consuming alcohol [present tense]. If you have stopped consuming alcohol, you will answer the questions as per your past consumption of alcohol [changing the self-assessment into past tense].)

Do you ...

1. Continue to consume alcohol even though it causes relationship problems? Yes / Maybe / No
2. Want to cut down on alcohol, but have difficulties doing so? Yes / Maybe / No
3. Have cravings or urges for alcohol? Yes / Maybe / No
4. Consume more alcohol or for longer periods of time than you intend? Yes / Maybe / No
5. Spend a lot of time getting alcohol, consuming alcohol or recovering from alcohol? Yes / Maybe / No
6. Find it difficult to manage your responsibilities at home, work or school because of your alcohol consumption? Yes / Maybe / No
7. Give up important social, work or leisure activities because of alcohol consumption? Yes / Maybe / No
8. Consume alcohol again and again even though it puts you in danger? Yes / Maybe / No

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|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| 9. Continue to consume alcohol even though your physical or emotional health is worse from it? | Yes / Maybe / No |
| 10. Need to consume more alcohol to get the desired effects from it? | Yes / Maybe / No |
| 11. Have withdrawal symptoms (nervousness, irritation, headaches, depression, sweating, heart racing or tension) when you don't consume alcohol for a while, and then these go away when you return to it? | Yes / Maybe / No |

My total number of “yes” or “maybe” responses:

If you responded “yes” or “maybe” to just two or three of the questions, you may have a *mild* AUD. An AUD is *moderate* with four or five “yes” or “maybe” responses, and is *severe* with six or more “yes” or “maybe” responses.

Underlying Reasons for Alcohol Consumption

Shared in the video, is that there are all kinds of reasons for alcohol consumption regardless of the amounts you consumed, or how problematic your alcohol consumption may have been. Many underlying reasons for alcohol consumption including, stress, anxiety, worry, depression, anger, guilt, shame, grief and boredom are well known. It is also well known that childhood experiences of trauma, such as emotional, physical, and sexual abuse can predispose a person to consume alcohol later in life as a means of coping. Consider the underlying reasons for your consumption of alcohol from the list below.

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|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| • Anxious | • Embarrassed | • Bored |
| • Stressed | • Humiliated | • Lonely |
| • Worried | • Criticized | • Disconnected |
| • Nervous | • Pressured | • Detached |
| • Inauthentic | • Inadequate | • Uncomfortable |
| • Overwhelmed | • Insecure | • Happy |
| • Afraid | • Deprived | • Confident |
| • Avoiding | • Neglected | • Excited |
| • Paranoid | • Envious | • Passionate |
| • Sad | • Jealous | • Aroused |
| • Depressed | • Resentful | • Hungry |
| • Angry | • Revengeful | • Tired |
| • Frustrated | • Guilty | • Other _____ |
| • Irritated | • Shameful | • Other _____ |
| • Rebellious | • Punished | |
| • Misunderstood | • Grieving | |

How Behaviour Changes

The video highlights that changing your alcohol consumption is possible regardless of the reason for consuming or amounts consumed. It says that in order to do so it's helpful to think about the biological (what you do with your body), psychological (how you think), sociological (who you spend time with) and spiritual ways that people make change. In the chart below, consider the changes you can make in each one of these areas.

Biological	Psychological
(Do I need to change my diet? Is exercise a part of my regular routine? Should I consider anti-craving medications for my alcohol consumption?)	(Do I know my indicators for stress? How does anxiety show up for me? What do I do to manage worry? Do I tend to use unhelpful thinking styles? [for example: catastrophizing, mindreading, disqualifying the positive] Am I aware of my automatic thoughts related to my alcohol consumption? [for example: "I'm going to test myself to see if I can have just one," "I need something to take the edge off and help me relax," "I can't have fun or excitement if I don't drink"])

<p style="text-align: center;">Sociological</p> <p>(Do I have healthy and supportive relationships in my life? What can I do to improve my relationships? Do I need to create boundaries in some of my relationships? How do I spend time with people in healthy ways?)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Spiritual</p> <p>(Is having a spiritual connection important to me? What does spirituality look like for me? How can I connect with my spiritual self? What are my core values? What are my natural skills and gifts?)</p>
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Benefits of Abstinence from Alcohol

The video names a few benefits that may be enjoyed with abstinence from alcohol – money saved, improved mental focus, more productive use of time, better physical health, deepened relationships, and longevity of life. What are some of the benefits you anticipate enjoying/have enjoyed in your abstinence from alcohol?

Finally, the video encourages reaching out for support should you feel like it would be helpful for you. On the next page are some ways that you can do that for both alcohol consumption and liver disease.

Finding Support

There are several forms of support that are available to assist individuals who would like to make changes to their alcohol consumption. A few of these are listed below:

- **Withdrawal Management** – for those who are consuming alcohol daily or near daily, those who have experienced significant withdrawal symptoms (ie. seizures, “shakes,” anxiety, restlessness and/or auditory or visual hallucinations), those whose experience with significant withdrawal symptoms have made it difficult for them to make changes to their alcohol consumption in the past and/or those who have tried several times to make changes to their alcohol consumption on their own but have had difficulty doing so
- **Anti-craving Medications** – for those whose cravings for alcohol make it difficult for them to make changes to their alcohol consumption and/or those who have tried several times to make changes to their alcohol consumption on their own but have had difficulty doing so
- **Assessment & Treatment Centres (Counselling)** – for anyone wanting individual counselling to make/sustain changes to their alcohol consumption and/or for those who are seeking referral to a residential treatment centre (on-site and overnight 18-365 day program of counselling and other activities)
- **Peer Support** – for anyone wanting to connect with others who have experienced challenges with their alcohol consumption
- **Other** – for those who are struggling with a concurrent mental health concern, history of trauma, ongoing violence etc. and this is a barrier to making change to their alcohol use

Ontario-wide Resource

ConnexOntario - phone 1-866-531-2600, e-mail www.connexontario.ca/en-ca/send-email, text "CONNEXT" to 247247, webchat www.connexontario.ca/Chat, or visit online www.connexontario.ca

- Immediate, free and confidential mental health and substance use support offered 24/7
- Offers connection with someone who will listen, provide support and offer strategies
- Present options for local treatment services

Withdrawal Management

London

Salvation Army Center of Hope

- Address: 281 Wellington St.
- Phone: (519) 432-7241 or (519) 661-0343 ext 270 or 271

Kitchener/Waterloo

Withdrawal Management Centre (Grand River Hospital)

- Address: 52 Glasgow St.
- Phone: (519) 749-4318

Windsor

Withdrawal Management Centre (Windsor Regional Hospital)

- Address: 1453 Prince Rd.
- Phone: (519) 257-5225

Sarnia

Bluewater Health – Mental Health and Addiction Services

- Address: 89 Norman St., level 6 (Russell Building)
- Phone: (519) 464-4487

Thunder Bay

Balmoral Centre Withdrawal Management (St. Joseph's Care Group)

- Address: 667 Sibley Dr.
- Phone: (807) 623-6515

Withdrawal Management – Community Withdrawal (withdrawal management support at home)

London

CMHA Thames Valley Addiction and Mental Health Services – Community Withdrawal Support Program

- Address: 200 Queens Ave., Suite 260
- Phone: (519) 673-3242 ext. 1248

Kitchener/Waterloo

Offered through **House of Friendship & Stonehenge Therapeutic Community**

- Phone: 1- 844 -722-2977

Windsor

Erie St. Clair Addictions Centre

- Address: 1574 Lincoln Rd.
- Phone: (519) 977-9772

Sarnia

Bluewater Health – Mental Health and Addiction Services – Withdrawal Management Services

- Address: 89 Norman St., level 6 (Russell Building)
- Phone: (519) 332-4673

Anti-craving Medications

London

CMHA Thames Valley Addiction and Mental Health Services RAAM Clinic

- Address: 200 Queens Ave., Suite 260
- Phone: (519) 673-3242 ext. 281

Kitchener/Waterloo

House of Friendship – Community Addiction Support Services – RAAM Clinic

- Waterloo Region NP-Led Clinic – 13 Water St. N., Cambridge
- Grand River Hospital – 850 King St. W., Kitchener
- Duke Street Clinic – 150 Duke St. W., upper level, Kitchener
- Phone: (519) 957- 5000

Windsor

Erie St. Clair Addictions Centre RAAM Clinic

- Address: 1574 Lincoln Rd.
- Phone: (519) 977-9772

Thunder Bay

Thunder Bay Counselling RAAM Clinic (2 locations)

- NorWest Community Health Centre RAAM Clinic - 525 Simpson St.
- Dilico Anishinabek Family Care RAAM Clinic - 200 Anemki Place
- Phone: (807) 626-8478

Assessment & Treatment Centres (Counselling)

London

CMHA Thames Valley Addiction and Mental Health Services

- Address: 200 Queens Ave., Suite 260
- Phone: (519) 673-3242 ext. 1221

Kitchener/Waterloo

House of Friendship

- Address: 51 Charles St. E., Kitchener
- Phone: (519) 742-8327

Windsor

Hotel-Dieu Grace Healthcare Addiction Assessment and Referral

- Address: 744 Ouellette Ave.
- Phone: (519) 257-5224

Sarnia

Bluewater Health – Mental Health and Addiction Services

- Address: 89 Norman St. level 6 (Russell Building)
- Phone: (519) 464-4400 ext. 5370

Thunder Bay

Thunder Bay Counselling

- Address: 544 Winnipeg Ave.
- Phone: (807) 684-1880

Peer Support

Community Addictions Peer Support Association (CAPSA) – www.capsa.ca/peer-support

- Offers two peer support groups – All People All Pathways group and Breaking Free Wellness group
- All People All Pathways is a group designed for people to explore their relationship to substance use
- Breaking Free Wellness is a sub-group of the All People all Pathways group that offers evidence-based practices and tools to help in making behaviour change related to substance use
- Emphasis on stigma and discrimination free conversation
- Meetings are open to those seeking help or wanting to help others
- Organization in partnership with Health Canada and Wellness Together Canada
- All meetings online
- Calendar of meetings – www.capsa.ca/calendar/list

Self-Management and Recovery Training (SMART) Recovery – www.smartrecovery.org

- Offers evidenced-based cognitive-behavioural techniques to help resolve underlying issues surrounding substance use with specific attention on four points: 1) Building motivation, 2) Coping with urges, 3) Problem Solving and 4) Lifestyle Balance
- Emphasis on non-confrontational approach
- Open to anyone who is concerned about their substance use; separate meetings for family and friends concerned about someone else's substance use
- Non-profit organization
- Online and in-person meetings
- Find meetings by location – <https://meetings.smartrecovery.org/meetings/location/>

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) – www.aa.org

- Offers a spiritually-based 12-step program
- Emphasis on admitting powerlessness over alcohol, importance of seeking help from higher power and use of prayer and meditation

- Open to anyone who is concerned about their alcohol use; separate meetings for family and friends concerned about someone else's substance use (Al-Anon)
- Non-profit organization
- Online and in-person meetings
- Find meetings by location – www.aa.org/find-aa

Celebrate Recovery – www.celebraterecovery.ca

- Offers a biblically-based, recovery program that addresses Hurts, Hang-ups, and Habits using a 12-step approach
- Emphasis on learning to live differently through biblically-based teaching
- Non-profit organization
- Online and in-person meetings (depending on church that is hosting the meeting)
- Find meetings by location – www.celebraterecovery.ca/ontario/

Mental Health Supports

Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) – visit online www.cmha.ca

- Offers a wide range of free programming in different locations across Canada, visit online to find local services www.cmha.ca/find-your-cmha
- Bounceback program – A free, guided self-help program using online videos and a supportive “coach” for people aged 15, visit online www.bouncebackontario.ca/

Liver Disease & Transplant Specific Supports

Trillium Gift of Life Network – visit online www.giftoflife.on.ca/en/transplant.htm

- Governs donation and transplant services across the province
- Provides general information on transplant, and answers FAQ

Liver Canada – phone 1-800-563-5483, or visit online www.liver.ca/

- Provides patient support through education and peer support on liver disease, advocates on behalf of patients for better access to health care in order to improve quality of life, invests in research to support advances and breakthroughs in medical research related to liver disease and engages with the community provide share updated information

Online Peer Support Groups

Online ALD Relapse Prevention Program

- Facebook Groups - [Living with Liver Disease - Peer Support Group](#), [Support Group for Liver Transplant Patients](#), [Liver Transplant Patients and Families Canada](#)

Recommended Reading

- Coping with an Organ Transplant: A Practical Guide to Understanding, Preparing for, and Living with an Organ Transplant by E. Parr, & J. Mize (2001)
- 100 Questions & Answers about Liver Transplantation: A Lahey Clinic Guide by F. D. Gordon (2006)
- Not Done Yet: A Tale of Transformation through Transplant Surgery, by S. L. Willen (2014)
- Life Goes On: Journey of a Liver Transplant Recipient, by C. Jowett (2015)

Family and Caregiver Support

Ontario Caregiver Helpline – phone 1-833-416-2273, live chat or visit online www.ontariocaregiver.ca/

- Provides caregivers with a one-stop resource for information and support

Families for Addiction Recovery – phone 1-855-377-6677 (ext. 207), or visit online www.farcanada.org

- Peer support services for families, parents and caregivers of children (regardless of age)
- Phone Support Line, Parent-to-Parent Support and Online Parent Support Group

Liver Canada – phone 1-800-563-5483, or visit online www.liver.ca/patients-caregivers/for-caregivers/

- Provides support services and resources to caregivers of those with liver disease

Online Peer Support Groups

- Facebook Groups - [Caregivers of Liver Transplant Patients](#), [Liver Transplant Patients and Families Canada](#)