

TIME & WORKFLOW CONSIDERATIONS



RELATIVE PRIORITIES

Alcohol is a leading cause of preventable deaths

Alcohol is the 3rd leading cause of preventable deaths, following tobacco smoking and overweight/obesity. U.S. life expectancy is shorter than in other developed countries and has decreased for several years in a row. This decrease is largely being driven by more deaths in middle age, and alcohol, along with drug use and suicide, is a leading contributor. Screening in primary care settings can identify patients with unhealthy alcohol use; brief counseling and other interventions can reduce unhealthy alcohol consumption and improve health outcomes. In a busy primary care practice, competing demands are the norm. It is important to prioritize screening and counseling for unhealthy alcohol use because unhealthy alcohol use leads to more preventable deaths than most other health issues.



Alcohol's broad impact

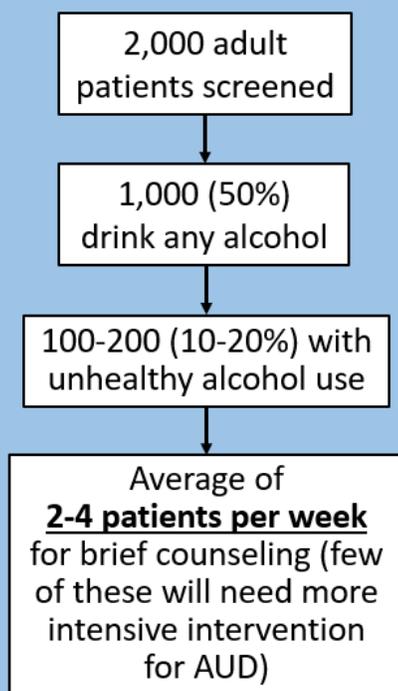
Consumption of alcohol in excess of recommended limits is associated with a long list of adverse health outcomes and social effects. These include:

- Injuries, accidents, violence
- Suicide
- Other mental health problems (e.g., depression, cognitive impairment)
- Cancers of the mouth, throat, esophagus, colon, liver, and breast
- Liver disease
- Other gastrointestinal problems (e.g., gastritis, ulcers, pancreatitis)
- Stroke
- Heart disease
- Miscarriages and still births

RUNNING THE NUMBERS

Screening & follow up: Your patient population

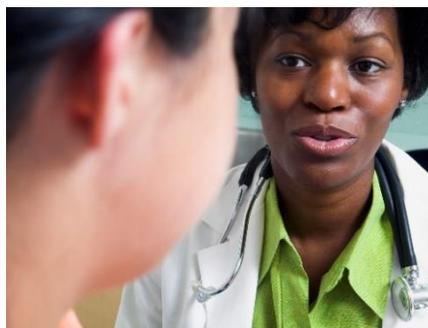
Estimate for 1st year of screening by 1 provider in North Carolina



Assumes perfect fidelity to protocol.
Percentages calculated with preceding box as denominator.

In North Carolina, about half of all people do not drink any alcohol. If a provider has a panel of 2,000 adults who are screened over the course of a year, 100-200 of them would have unhealthy alcohol use and require brief counseling. This would translate to (at most) an average of 2 to 4 patients with positive screens needing brief counseling each week.

Clinician's perspective



"I do think the screening and counseling interventions are effective. In my clinic we have identified several patients by screening who I did not know were drinking so heavily...In terms of counseling for patients with unhealthy alcohol use, I've had multiple patients cut back to

healthy drinking limits after a few brief conversations about it. **Many patients are grateful to know that cutting back a little bit can improve their health.**"