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WHAT EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT ALCOHOL USE DISORDER (AUD)

AUD is a chronic, relapsing medical condition characterized by an impaired ability to stop or control alcohol consumption, even though it causes adverse health, social, and economic consequences.[1] Despite the life and health consequences, fewer than **1 in 9** individuals with AUD **perceive the need for treatment.**[2]



Everyone pays the price of excessive alcohol use.*

Cost to self

In the United States (US), **~488 deaths** each day are attributed to excessive alcohol use.[3,†]

Cost to friends and family

~7.5 million US children live with a parent who has AUD.[4]

Cost to society

Excessive alcohol consumption cost the US an estimated **$249 billion in 2010**.[5,‡]

*Excessive alcohol use is defined by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as drinking in ways that can negatively impact health.[3]
†Based on deaths per year in the US during 2020-2021.
‡Not adjusted for inflation.

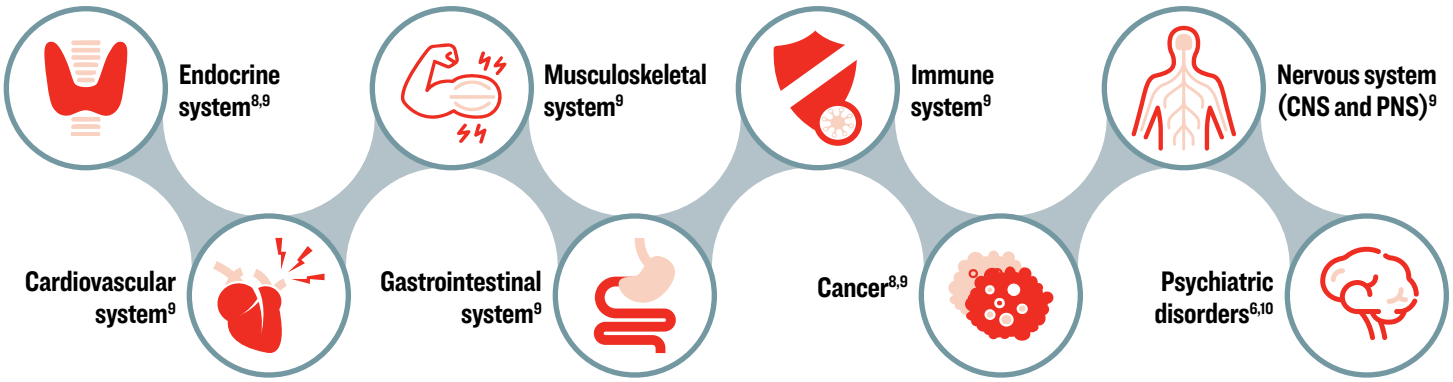
The risk of alcohol-related harm increases with the amount of alcohol consumed in a single drinking day[6]

RISK LEVEL[§]	MEN	WOMEN
Low	**≤40g** (~3 drinks)	**≤20g** (~1.5 drinks)
Medium	**41-60g** (~3-4 drinks)	**21-40g** (~1.5-3 drinks)
High	**61-100g** (~4-7 drinks)	**41-60g** (~3-4 drinks)
Very high	**≥101g** (~7 drinks)	**≥61g** (~4 drinks)

[§]The World Health Organization (WHO) stratifies drinking into the risk categories shown above; The number of drinks are calculated based on a US standard drink containing 14g of pure ethanol.[3,6]

The Medical and Life Consequences of Excessive Alcohol Use and AUD Are Widespread

The Effects of Alcohol Span Many Organ Systems and Diseases[7]



CNS=central nervous system. PNS=peripheral nervous system.

The Medical and Life Consequences of Excessive Alcohol Use and AUD Are Widespread (cont.)

Psychosocial Problems and Other Risks Associated With Excessive Alcohol Use and AUD Include

Injuries[11]
Motor vehicle accidents, falls, drowning

Violence[11]
Sexual violence, domestic violence, homicide, suicide

Social Problems[11,12]
Family problems, lost productivity, workplace absenteeism

There are a number of factors that increase the risk that someone will develop AUD.

- Higher levels of alcohol intake and patterns of heavy alcohol use over time[13-16]
- Drinking at an early age[13,16]
- Genetics and family history of alcohol problems—50%-60% of the risk of developing AUD is inherited[16,17]
- A family history that includes parental habits like frequent drinking or supplying alcohol to minors[13]
- Aversive childhood experiences, cumulative life stressors, or trauma[13,16,18]
- Lower educational attainment and socioeconomic deprivation[13]
- Psychiatric conditions (eg, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, and anxiety) increase risk and often co-occur with AUD[13,16,18]

AUD Exists Along a Spectrum and Can Be Mild, Moderate, or Severe

AUD severity assessment is based on the number of DSM-5 criteria met.[18-21]

MILD: 2-3 | MODERATE: 4-5 | SEVERE: ≥6

The DSM-5 defines AUD as a problematic pattern of alcohol use leading to clinically significant impairment or distress, as manifested by at least two of the following occurring within a 12-month period[19]:

Diagnostic Criteria

1. Alcohol is often taken in larger amounts or over a longer period than was intended
2. There is a persistent desire or unsuccessful efforts to cut down or control alcohol use
3. A great deal of time is spent in activities necessary to obtain alcohol, use alcohol, or recover from its effects
4. Craving or a strong desire or urge to use alcohol
5. Recurrent alcohol use resulting in a failure to fulfill major role obligations at work, school, or home
6. Continued alcohol use despite having social or interpersonal problems caused by the effects of alcohol
7. Important social, occupational, or recreational activities are given up or reduced because of alcohol use
8. Recurrent alcohol use in situations in which it is physically hazardous
9. Alcohol use is continued despite knowledge of having a persistent or recurrent physical or psychological problem that is likely to have been caused or exacerbated by alcohol
10. Tolerance, as evidenced by a need for increased amounts of alcohol to achieve intoxication effect or markedly reduced effect with ongoing use of the same amount of alcohol
11. Withdrawal syndrome or drinking alcohol to prevent withdrawal

DSM-5=Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th Edition.

AUD is underdiagnosed and undertreated. *But it doesn't have to be.*

Despite the high prevalence of AUD, affecting **~1 in 10** American adults, it remains **underdiagnosed and undertreated in clinical practice.**[22,23]



In a national sample of patients at risk for AUD,

90% of all individuals **with elevated risk** & **60%** of those **with severe risk** were undiagnosed.[22]

Be the change catalyst for your patients.
Asking the right questions could change everything.

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