

# Worried about a family member or friend?



Use this questionnaire to review the drinking behavior of someone close to you.

## How can I recognize signs of alcohol use disorder in someone I care about?

**Check all that apply.**

- Drinking more or longer than intended
- Attempting to cut down or stop drinking without success
- Spending a lot of time drinking or getting over aftereffects
- Wanting a drink so badly that thoughts are focused on drinking
- Experiencing medical, family, financial or professional problems caused by drinking
- Continuing to drink despite troubles with family and friends
- Giving up on activities and interests in order to drink
- Engaging in risky or harmful situations, such as driving or having unprotected sex, more than once as a result of drinking
- Continuing drinking habits despite feeling depressed or anxious or after a memory blackout
- Increasing the amount of drinks consumed to achieve desired effect
- Suffering from withdrawal symptoms, such as shakiness or sweating, after the effects of alcohol subside

## Questionnaire Interpretation

If two or more boxes are checked, your family member or friend may be drinking too much. Speaking with a health professional may help.

Source: Adapted from National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, Alcohol Use Disorder: A Comparison Between DSM-IV and DSM-5. NIH Publication No. 13-7999. July 2015.

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## What to do if you think a friend or family member may have an alcohol problem:

- **Let your friend or family member know** that risky drinking can lead to more severe alcohol problems including alcohol dependence (alcoholism), as well as injuries and unwanted/unprotected sex.
- **Seek out resources in your local community**, such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Al-Anon and Alateen, as well as mental health clinics, therapists, clergy, doctors and social workers who are knowledgeable about alcohol problems. Don't let pride or fear block your efforts to get help for yourself and your friend or family member.
- **Use the resources.** Do what you can to encourage your friend or family member to get help, but remember the only person you can change is yourself. Don't hesitate to use the resources to help yourself.
- **Don't make excuses for the drinker.** Family members often try to protect a loved one from the consequences of their drinking by making excuses to others. Making excuses allows your loved one to avoid changing for the better.
- **Choose a good time to talk with the drinker**, such as shortly after an alcohol-related problem has occurred. Choose a time when he or she is sober, when both of you are calm and when you can speak privately.
- **Be specific.** Tell the friend or family member that you are concerned about his or her drinking and want to be supportive in getting help. Back up your concern with examples of the ways in which his or her drinking has caused problems for both of you, including the most recent incident.
- **Seek out** the people and resources that can support you (see resources list). Keep in mind you are not alone. There is hope and practical help available in your local community.

To take an online, anonymous assessment visit  
[AfterDeployment.dcoe.mil/assessment/alcohol](https://AfterDeployment.dcoe.mil/assessment/alcohol)

**To discuss treatment options, contact your installation's alcohol and substance abuse prevention program.**

## RESOURCES

### **Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury (DCoE) Outreach Center**

- (866) 966-1020
- [resources@dcoeoutreach.org](mailto:resources@dcoeoutreach.org)
- [realwarriors.net/livechat](http://realwarriors.net/livechat)

### **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration**

- (800) 662-HELP
- [samhsa.gov](http://samhsa.gov)
- [findtreatment.samhsa.gov](http://findtreatment.samhsa.gov)

### **National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism**

- [niaaa.nih.gov](http://niaaa.nih.gov)

### **NIAAA Rethinking Drinking Campaign**

- [rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov](http://rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov)