

Digital Mental Health for Alcohol Use Problems

WHAT IS AN ALCOHOL USE DISORDER?

An alcohol use disorder occurs when someone continues to drink alcohol despite this leading to negative consequences, needs to drink more to get the same effect, experiences withdrawal symptoms (like trouble sleeping after drinking or more extremely, seizures when cutting down), spends a lot of time drinking or thinking about drinking, or finds it difficult to cut down.

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PDF version from the
eMHPrac Website



People often engage in addictive behaviours to feel good or to stop themselves from feeling bad. However, an addiction often leads to further problems. Getting help from a professional can significantly improve your chances of recovery.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF AN ALCOHOL USE DISORDER?

Physical

- Shakiness, restlessness, nausea, sweating, trouble sleeping or racing heart when the effects of alcohol wear off.
- Seizures or seeing things/hearing things that are not there when cutting down.
- Memory blackouts.
- Needing more alcohol to get the same effect.
- Physical health problems such as reflux, high blood pressure, decreased immune response (such as getting sick often or not recovering well), liver disease, heart disease.

Psychological

- Feeling out of control.
- Minimising the consequences - "It won't happen to me".
- Thinking about alcohol when you don't want to be.
- Feeling anxious, angry or depressed.
- Relationship difficulties.
- Losing interest in or giving up on other activities.

Behavioural

- Finding it hard to cut down or stop drinking.
- Drinking more often or for longer periods than you set out to.
- Employment difficulties such as being late to work.
- Not keeping on top of housework or falling behind in responsibilities with children.
- Withdrawing from family or friends.
- Engaging in risky behaviours such as driving under the influence or having unprotected sex.

! STAYING SAFE WITH ALCOHOL

If you think you might have a problem with alcohol **do not try to stop or cut down** on your own. It can be very dangerous. See your GP for safe ways to cut down - your details will remain confidential.

Are you pregnant? There is no healthy amount of alcohol. If you are unsure or wish to stop drinking, please check with your GP.

Drinking too much alcohol can be very dangerous. Taking alcohol with different types of drugs (including prescription medications) together can also lead to serious consequences. Find out more on the **Drug Aware** website.

There is no completely safe way to drink alcohol - even a small amount of alcohol creates risks for your health and wellbeing. If you do choose to drink, please check the following "safer ways to use" guidelines on the **Touchbase** website.

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This resource sheet is designed for mental health professionals to use, whether as a resource to share with clients or as a reference guide. Others are welcome to use or share this resource for general information purposes only and within the scope of their professional role.

National Mental Health Website



Head to Health

A website that links Australians to free or low-cost online and phone mental health services.
headtohealth.gov.au

Information Sites



Turning Point

Information and self-assessment for addictions for health professionals, individuals and their carers.
<https://www.turningpoint.org.au>



AOD Knowledge Centre (ATSI)

Information to help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people reduce their use of alcohol and other drugs.
<https://aodknowledgecentre.edu.au>



Your Room

Information about alcohol and other drugs.
<https://yourroom.health.nsw.gov.au/>



Touchbase

Information, support and services for LGBTIQ+ Australians on alcohol, other drugs and tobacco use and mental health. Tips to stay safe, cut down or seek extra support.
<https://touchbase.org.au>



Pivot Point

Self-assessment tool, information and tips for LGBTIQ+ on alcohol, tobacco, and other substances and how to support a loved one with addictions.
<https://pivotpoint.org.au/>

Phone Services

Counselling Online

Online, text-based service to communicate with a professional counsellor about your alcohol and drug use, or that of a loved one.
<http://www.counsellingonline.org.au/>



National Alcohol and Other Drug Hotline

Connect to alcohol and drug information services operating in your state/area.
1800 250 015

Alcohol and Drug Foundation

Information, tools and ideas to reduce the harm of alcohol and other drugs. Path2Help referral tool, text-the-effects SMS service and links to drug information and advice line.
<https://adf.org.au>
1300 85 85 84



Apps



Hello Sunday Morning: Daybreak App

An app to help individuals change their relationship with alcohol, with professional and community support.
<https://hellosundaymorning.org/daybreak/>



On Track with The Right Mix

An app to help individuals keep track of their drinking over time.
Available on Apple Store and Google Play



Drinks Meter

An app providing instant, unbiased, and anonymous feedback on your drinking
<https://www.drinksmeter.com>



Breathing Space

Moderated and secure social network for people wanting to improve their wellbeing and resilience while supporting someone with their alcohol use.
<https://breathingspace.community/communities>



SWiPE

Brain-training app based on neuroscience to switch off from autopilot, allowing you to move towards your goals and values.
<https://www.swipebraintraining.com.au/>

Online Programs



eClipSE

Self-help tools, factsheets and online programs for alcohol use, anxiety, and depression.
<https://uoneclipse.com.au/ehealth-programs-on-eclipse>



Family and Friend Support Programs

Programs for people supporting someone using alcohol and/or other drugs on people who live in rural or remote regions.
<https://ffsp.com.au>

For Parents and Youth



ReachOut

Information, referral and forums for people under 25 years, their parents and schools on drugs and alcohol.
<https://au.reachout.com>



Parenting Strategies

Evidence based parenting guidelines to assist the prevention or reduction in your teen's alcohol use.
<https://www.parentingstrategies.net/>



Positive Choices

Information on substance use and addictive behaviours.
www.positivechoices.org.au