

# Reducing Risky Drinking

If you are ready to change your use of alcohol, it is important to have a plan. Think about why you want to change your drinking, what you can do to drink less, and what your goals are for alcohol use.



## Why do I want to reduce my drinking?

There are many reasons to want to cut down on the amount of alcohol you drink. Drinking can harm your health, your work, and your family and friends. What reasons do you have to drink less?

- I want to cut down for my health.
- I don't sleep as well when I drink.
- Drinking makes it harder to take care of myself.
- I don't feel good when I drink.
- I miss important events or deadlines when I drink.
- My family or friends worry about my drinking.
- I do dangerous things or things that I later regret when I drink, such as:
  - Drunk driving
  - Getting into fights
  - Hurting myself or others
  - Unprotected sex
- I have other reasons to drink less: \_\_\_\_\_

## How can I reduce my drinking?

There are many ways to cut down on alcohol. Mark the strategies below that you think might work for you. Try 1-2 strategies the first week and add others the following week.

- Keep a record of how much you drink and when. You may need to measure drinks or ask how much alcohol is in them. Standard drink sizes are:
  - 12 ounces of beer
  - 8 to 9 ounces of malt liquor
  - 5 ounces of wine
  - 1.5 ounces of 80-proof spirits
- Pace yourself when drinking – for example, have no more than one alcoholic drink per hour.
- Alternate alcoholic drinks with non-alcoholic drinks like water, juice, or soda.
- Eat food before and while you drink.
- Avoid people, places, or events that make you drink even when you don't want to.

## What are my goals for my drinking?

Decide on a day when you will start changing your drinking and write the date here: \_\_\_\_\_.

	What I do now	What I want to do
How often I drink		
How much I drink at a time		
Where I drink		

**In most cases, men should aim for no more than 2 and women no more than 1 drink per day. Talk to your doctor about your drinking and how much alcohol is safe for you.**