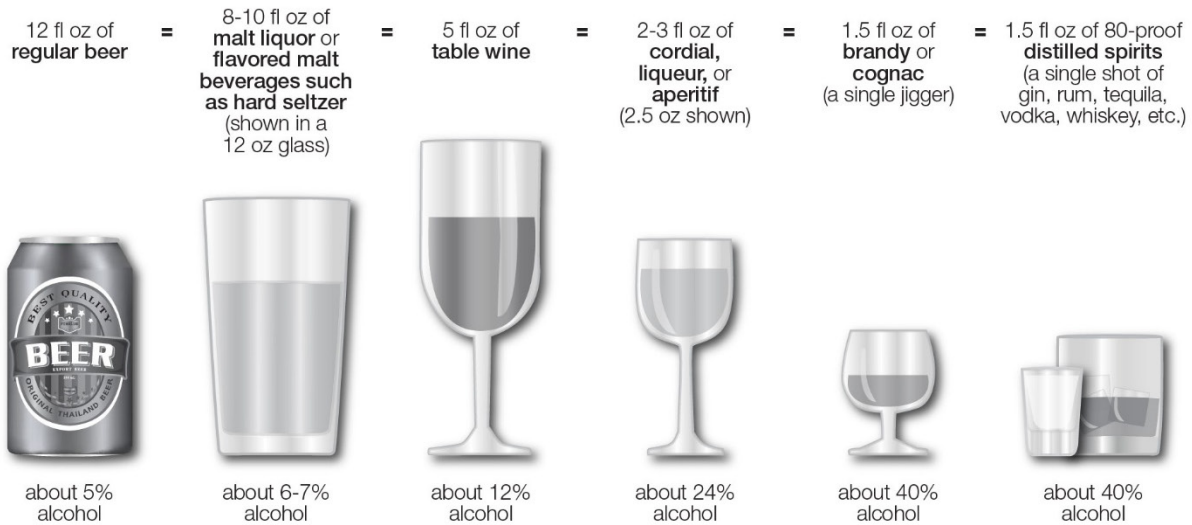


Patient Education

What is a “standard” drink?

In the United States, a “standard” drink is any drink that contains about 0.6 fluid ounces or 14 grams of “pure” alcohol. Although the drinks pictured here are different sizes, they all contain about the same amount of alcohol. They can be called “drink equivalents.”



These examples serve only as a starting point for comparison. The percent of “pure” alcohol by volume (alc/vol) can vary greatly within and across beverage types.

What are the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for alcohol?

To help Americans minimize risks associated with drinking, the *U.S. Dietary Guidelines (2020-2025)* advise adults who choose to drink to limit intake to:

- Women: 1 drink or less in a day
- Men: 2 drinks or less in a day

The *Guidelines* state that these amounts are **not intended as an average** over several days, but rather as the amount consumed on any single day. Even drinking within these limits may increase the risk for cancer and other harms. Caution is therefore recommended.

What is heavy drinking?

Heavy drinking is especially risky and should be avoided. Heavy drinking is defined as follows:

- Women: 4 or more drinks on any single day OR 8 or more drinks per week
- Men: 5 or more drinks on any single day OR 15 or more drinks per week

Sources: [RethinkingDrinking.niaaa.nih.gov](https://www.rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov) and [DietaryGuidelines.gov](https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov)