

Online Video Program Trains Clinicians to Help Patients Who Drink Too Much



National Institute on Alcohol Abuse
and Alcoholism (NIAAA)
<http://www.niaaa.nih.gov>

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A new, interactive video training program from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), demonstrates quick and effective strategies for screening patients for heavy drinking and helping them to cut down or quit.

"The video scenarios demonstrate evidence-based techniques for assessing and managing at-risk drinking and alcohol use disorders," says NIAAA Director Ting-Kai Li, M.D. "We want to make these techniques widely available to clinicians so that more people with alcohol use problems will get the help they need." Called *Video Case Studies: Helping Patients Who Drink Too Much*, the program is available through the NIAAA website at www.niaaa.nih.gov/guide

Based on the NIAAA Clinician's Guide, the online program features four 10-minute video case scenarios, each led by an expert clinician who offers insights and engages viewers in considering different strategies for treatment and follow-up. Continuing education credit for physicians and nurses who use the training program will be provided through Medscape.com.

"The videos model clinicians interacting with patients with different levels of alcohol involvement and who are in different stages of readiness to change," noted Mark Willenbring, M.D., director of NIAAA's Division of Treatment and Recovery Research. "The video scenarios take place in several different settings to show that clinicians in primary care, mental health, and other specialties are all in a prime position to make a difference."

In addition to the video case studies, the program includes a 15-to 20-minute tutorial on the NIAAA Clinicians Guide. With video narration and animated graphics, this section teaches clinicians how to:

- Ask patients about alcohol use
- Assess heavy drinkers for alcohol use disorders
- Help at-risk drinkers to cut back to safer drinking levels
- Help patients with alcohol use disorders to quit, including treating them with newer, effective medications for dependence when indicated

The tutorial and case studies require about an hour to complete.

"As physicians, we see the serious impact that excessive alcohol use can have on patients, their families and public safety," said Ronald M. Davis, M.D., president of the American Medical Association. "Scientific evidence shows if we can prevent alcohol consumption from becoming a problem, we can help stop thousands, even millions, of alcohol-related diseases and injuries. The AMA encourages physicians to learn how to conduct screening and brief interventions for at-risk drinking behavior and how to identify and treat alcoholism."

The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, part of the National Institutes of Health, is the primary U.S. agency for conducting and supporting research on the causes, consequences, prevention, and treatment of alcohol abuse, alcoholism, and alcohol problems and disseminates research findings to general, professional, and academic audiences. Additional alcohol research information and publications are available at www.niaaa.nih.gov

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) — The Nation's Medical Research Agency — includes 27 Institutes and Centers and is a component of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It is the primary federal agency for conducting and supporting basic, clinical and translational medical research, and it investigates the causes, treatments, and cures for both common and rare diseases. For more information about NIH and its programs, visit www.nih.gov.

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