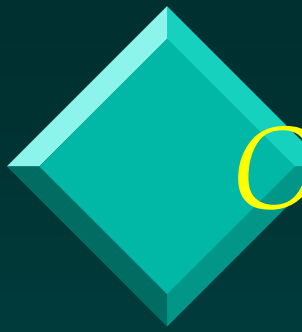




*Screening for Alcohol Problems  
in Social Work Setting*

NIAAA Social Work Education  
Module 4

3/04



# *Outline*

- A. Screening Basics
- B. Screening Tools
- C. Screening in Social  
Work Practice



# Screening Issues

- Importance to practice
- Various approaches:
  - structured interview
  - self-report instruments/questionnaires,
  - clinical laboratory tests
- Screening *versus* diagnosis




# Screening Accuracy

## Sensitivity

- Ability of a screening tool to avoid false negatives; accuracy in including all who have the problem.
- False Negative – Subject has problem; incorrectly identified as not having the problem.

## Specificity

- Ability of a screening tool to avoid false positives; accuracy in not including non-affected persons.
- False Positive – Subject does not have problem; incorrectly identified as having the problem.



# *Screening*

First Rule...

**ASK**



“Do you drink alcohol?”

# Ask



*“On average,  
how many days  
a week do you  
drink?”*



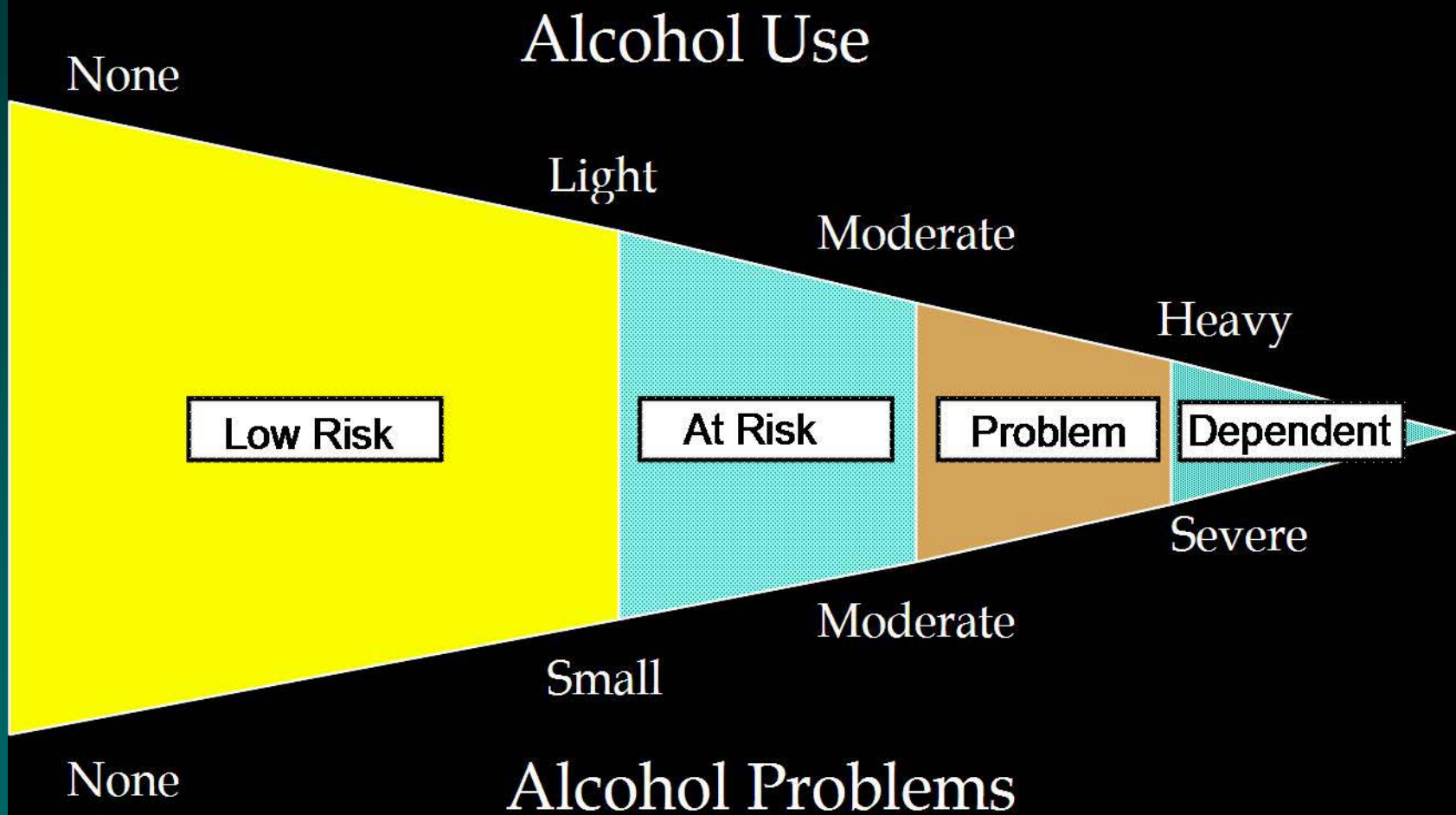
“On a day when you drink alcohol, how many drinks do you have?”



“What is the maximum number of drinks you consumed on any given occasion during the past month?”



# *Relationship Between Alcohol Use and Alcohol Problems...*





# *Why Ask?*

- We ask questions about the quantity and frequency of alcohol consumption because it is:
  - Common
  - Sensitive
  - Based on epidemiological research
  - Related to a continuum of risk

# Standard Drink Measure

**12 oz. of  
beer or  
cooler**



**12 oz.**

**8-9 oz. of  
malt liquor**

8.5 oz. shown in a  
12-oz. glass that,  
if full, would hold  
about 1.5  
standard drinks of  
malt liquor



**8.5 oz**

**5 oz. of  
table wine**



**5 oz.**

**3-4 oz. of  
fortified  
wine**

(such as sherry or  
port) 3.5 oz.  
shown



**3.5 oz.**

**2-3 oz. of  
cordial,  
liqueur, or  
aperitif**

2.5 oz. shown



**2.5 oz.**

**1.5 oz. of  
brandy**  
(a single jigger)



**1.5 oz.**

**1.5 oz. of  
spirits**

(a single jigger of 80-  
proof gin, vodka,  
whiskey, etc.) Shown  
straight and in a  
highball glass with  
ice to show level  
before adding mixer



**1.5 oz.**

**Note:** People buy many of these drinks in containers that hold multiple standard drinks. For example, malt liquor is often sold in 16-, 22-, or 40 oz. containers that hold between two and five standard drinks, and table wine is typically sold in 25 oz (750 ml.) bottles that hold five standard drinks.



# *Defining “At-Risk” Drinking*

- Differs by age
- Differs by gender
- Differs by pregnancy status
- Differs by health/medication status
- Differs by family history of alcoholism



# *Screening Tools*

Self-administered screening tests asking about quantity/frequency and binge use of alcohol:

- CAGE
- S-MAST (Short Michigan Alcohol Screening Test)
- AUDIT (Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test)
- HSS (Health Screening Survey)
- Computerized lifestyle questionnaires



# CAGE

Asks client about the past year:

C = Cutting down on drinking considered?

A = Annoyed you by criticizing drinking?

G = Guilt about your drinking?

E = Eye openers necessary?

Designed to detect alcohol dependence

Will miss up to 50% of at-risk drinkers



# *NIAAA Physicians Guide*

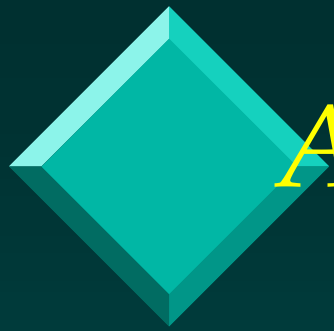
- *Physicians Guide* recommends:
  1. using the CAGE  
plus
  2. questions about quantity and  
frequency of consumption



# AUDIT

- Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test
- Structured interview
- Introduction: Tell client that you will be asking questions about his/her use of alcoholic beverages during the past year.
- Circle the number that comes closest to client's answer.





## *AUDIT (continued)*

1. How often do you have a drink containing alcohol?  
(0) never (1) monthly or less (2) 2-4 times/month  
(3) 2-3 times/week (4) 4 or more times/week
2. How many drinks containing alcohol do you have on a typical day when you are drinking? [number of standard drinks]  
(0) 1-2 (1) 3-4 (2) 5-6 (3) 7-9 (4) 10 or more



## AUDIT (continued)

3. How often do you have six or more drinks on one occasion?

(0) never (1) less than monthly (2) monthly  
(3) weekly (4) daily or almost daily

4. How often during the last year have you found that you were not able to stop drinking once you had started?

(0) never (1) less than monthly (2) monthly  
(3) weekly (4) daily or almost daily



# *AUDIT (continued)*

5. How often during the last year have you failed to do what was normally expected from you because of drinking?

(0) never    (1) less than monthly    (2) monthly  
(3) weekly    (4) daily or almost daily

6. How often during the last year have you needed a first drink in the morning to get yourself going after a heavy drinking session?

(0) never    (1) less than monthly    (2) monthly  
(3) weekly    (4) daily or almost daily



## *AUDIT (continued)*

7. How often during the last year have you had a feeling of guilt or remorse after drinking?

(0) never (1) less than monthly (2) monthly  
(3) weekly (4) daily or almost daily

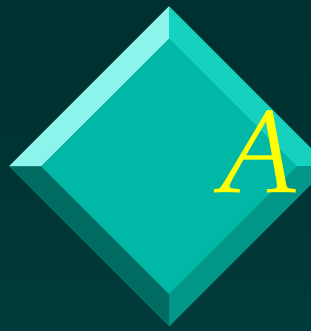
8. How often during the last year have you been unable to remember what happened the night before because you had been drinking?

(0) never (1) less than monthly (2) monthly  
(3) weekly (4) daily or almost daily



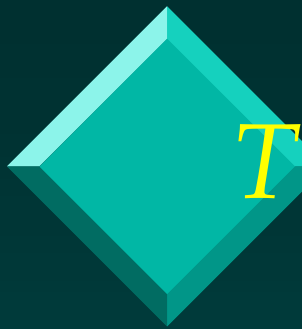
## *AUDIT (continued)*

9. Have you or someone else been injured as a result of your drinking?  
(0) No (2) Yes, but not in the last year  
(4) Yes, during the last year
10. Has a relative or friend or doctor or other health worker been concerned about your drinking or suggested you cut down?  
(0) No (2) Yes, but not in the last year  
(4) Yes, during the last year



# *AUDIT (continued)*

- In determining the response categories, it has been assumed that one “drink” contains 10g of alcohol. In countries where the alcohol content of a standard drink differs by more than 25% from 10g, the response category should be modified accordingly.
- Record sum of individual item scores:
- A score of 8 or greater may indicate the need for a more in-depth assessment



# *T-ACE and TWEAK*

## T- ACE

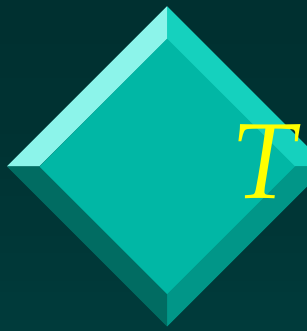
Tolerance = How many drinks does it take to make you feel high?

Annoyed = Have people annoyed you by criticizing your drinking?

## TWEAK

Tolerance = How many drinks can you hold?

Worried = Have close friends or relatives worried or complained about your drinking in the past year?



## *T- ACE and TWEAK (continued)*

### T- ACE

Cut down = Have you ever felt you ought to cut down on your drinking?

Eye opener = Have you ever had a drink first thing in the morning to steady your nerves or get rid of a hangover?

### TWEAK

Kut down = Do you some-times feel the need to cut down on your drinking?

Eye opener = Do you some-times take a drink in the morning when you get up?

Amnesia = Has a friend or family member ever told you about things you said or did while you were drinking that you couldn't remember?





# CHARM

- C = Cutting down; heaviest drinking period in your history?**
- H = Habits and personal rules about drinking**
- A = Annoyed by others' reactions**
- R = Reasons for drinking, including sleep**
- M = More than you intended to drink**



# *RAFT/CRAFT*

- Specific adolescent screening tools:
- Ask about peer group/friends
- Ask about problematic consequences
- Ask about related high-risk behavior (CRAFT)
- Ask about drinking alone



# *Screening Adolescents*

- ADI (Adolescent Drinking Index)
- AAIS (Adolescent Alcohol Involvement Scale)
- DAP (Drug & Alcohol Problem Quick Screen)
- SSI-AOD (Simple Screening Instrument for Alcohol and Other Drug Use)
- PESQ (Personal Experience Screening Questionnaire)
- DUSI (Drug Use Screening Inventory)
- POSIT (Problem Oriented Screening Instrument for Teenagers)



# *Clinical Laboratory Testing*

- Poor sensitivity and specificity in screening; only 10-30% problem drinkers identified
- Confirming lab tests might include:
  - GGT
  - MCV
  - CDT



# *Screening in Practice*

## Screening Opportunities

- Intake interviews
- Home visits
- Office visits
- Telephone contacts
- Family member visits

## Increasing Accuracy

- Consider the context
- Use a sensitive approach
- Be alert to nonverbal cues



# *Assessing Health Problems*

Ask about alcohol-related health problems:  
Is there a history of...

- Liver dysfunction
- Hypertension
- Chronic abdominal pain
- Depression
- Sexually transmitted disease
- Headaches
- Suicide ideation
- Trauma
- Anxiety or panic attacks
- Sleeping problems
- Pancreatitis



# *Assessing Health (continued)*

Consider requesting clinical laboratory tests.  
Understand their indications, methodology, collection issues, interpretations, and legal issues in their use.

- Blood/Urine Alcohol Levels (breath, urine, blood, skin sampling)
- GGT
- SGOT
- CDT
- MCV
- HDL



# *Assessing Family, Social, and Employment Problems*

- Have you ever been arrested for driving while under the influence of alcohol?
- Have any family members, friends, or people at work ever asked you to change your drinking habits?
- Has your drinking caused problems in your life?
- Have you ever participated in a work-related alcohol treatment program?
- Have you ever had a problem with your job because of drinking?





# *Assessing for Evidence of Physical Dependence*

- Do you ever drink in the morning to get over a bad hangover?
- Do you develop shakes when you stop drinking for more than a day?
- Have you ever been in DTs, been detoxed, or had an alcohol withdrawal seizure?
- Have you ever been treated for alcohol or drug withdrawal?
- How many days a week do you drink in the morning?



## *Steps for Alcohol Screening & Brief Intervention*

### Step I - Ask about Alcohol Use

- Consumption (drinks per week and per occasion)
- CAGE

If consumption is: Men: >14 drinks/wk or > 4/occasion

Women: >7 drinks/wk or >3/occasion

Men & women: Score 1 or more on CAGE

### Step II – Assess for alcohol-related problems

- Medical
- Behavioral
- Alcohol dependence
- Readiness to change



## *Steps for Alcohol Screening & Brief Intervention*

### Step III – Advise Appropriate Action

#### Alcohol dependence

- Advise to abstain
- Refer to a specialist
- Consider pharmacotherapy

#### Alcohol-related problems or at risk for developing problems

- Advise to cut down
- Set a drinking goal
- Consider pharmacotherapy

### Step IV – Monitor and Assist