

# Worried about a Friend or Family Member?

Use this questionnaire to review the drinking behavior of someone close to you. If you would like to speak with a health professional about your concerns, please check the box under "Questionnaire Interpretation" before returning this form to a screening staff person.

## How Can I Recognize Signs of an Alcohol Problem in Someone I Care About?

Please check all that apply:

- Drinking to calm nerves, forget worries or boost a sad mood
- Guilt about drinking
- Unsuccessful attempts to cut down/stop drinking
- Lying about or hiding drinking habits
- Causing harm to oneself or someone else as a result of drinking
- Needing to drink increasingly greater amounts in order to achieve desired effect
- Feeling irritable, resentful or unreasonable when not drinking
- Medical, social, family or financial problems caused by drinking
- Spending a great deal of time getting alcohol and drinking alcohol
- Drinking in risky situations such as before driving or before engaging in unwanted/unprotected sex

Source: Adapted from Greenfield, S. *Educational Lecture for National Alcohol Screening Day*. 1999. Updated by Richard Saitz, MD, MPH

## Questionnaire Interpretation

If you checked any of the circles above, please consider talking with a health professional today or getting a referral to speak with a professional at a later date. Help is available both for you and your family member or friend.

Would you like the opportunity to discuss your concerns with a health professional today?  Yes  No

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## What to do if you think a friend or family member may have an alcohol problem:

- ✓ **Let your friend or family member know** that risky drinking can lead to more severe alcohol problems including alcohol dependence (alcoholism), as well as injuries and unwanted/unprotected sex.
- ✓ **Seek out resources** in your local community such as AA, Al-Anon, and Alateen, as well as mental health clinics, therapists, clergy, doctors, and social workers who are knowledgeable about alcohol problems. Don't let pride or fear block your efforts to get help for yourself and your friend or family member.
- ✓ **Use the resources.** Do what you can to encourage your friend or family member to get help, but remember the only person you can change is yourself. Don't hesitate to use the resources to help yourself.
- ✓ **Don't make excuses for the drinker.** Family members often try to protect a loved one from the consequences of his or her drinking by making excuses to others. Making excuses allows your loved one to avoid changing for the better.
- ✓ **Choose a good time to talk with the drinker,** such as shortly after an alcohol-related problem has occurred. Choose a time when he or she is sober, when both of you are calm and when you can speak privately.
- ✓ **Be specific.** Tell the friend or family member that you are concerned about his or her drinking and want to be supportive in getting help. Back up your concern with examples of the ways in which his or her drinking has caused problems for both of you, including the most recent incident.
- ✓ **Seek out** the people and resources that can support you (see below). Keep in mind you are not alone. There is hope and practical help available in your local community.

## Resources

- National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism  
(301) 443-3860, [www.niaaa.nih.gov](http://www.niaaa.nih.gov)
- Center for Substance Abuse Treatment  
(800) 729-6686 or (800) 662-HELP,  
[www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)
- Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters  
U.S.: (800) 344-2666 Canada: (800) 443-4525  
[www.al-anon.alateen.org](http://www.al-anon.alateen.org)
- Alcoholics Anonymous World Services  
(212) 870-3400, [www.alcoholics-anonymous.org](http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org)