

Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT): description, strengths and knowledge gaps^[1]

Purpose

The ten item Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT) screens for hazardous and harmful alcohol consumption.^[2]

Drug(s) of Concern

- Alcohol

Time-frame(s) of Interest

- Lifetime
- Recent (last 12 months)

Populations Tested¹

- Males & females^[2-4]
- Young people^[5, 6]
- Adults^[3, 7, 8]
- Older people^[7, 9, 10]
- Culturally and linguistically diverse populations^[2, 11, 12]

Settings Tested

- AOD specialist services^[3, 7]
- Health^[13]
- Primary care^[2, 3, 7, 11, 14-16]
- Emergency departments^[6, 17]
- Mental health^[7]
- General population^[8, 11]
- Research
- Online^[18]
- Information standards^[19]

Diagnostics

Utility:

- ✓ Validated in Australia^[2]
- ✓ Concurrent validity with DSM-5 alcohol use disorder diagnostic assessment screen; with 5, 7 and 13 thresholds for mild, moderate and severe dependence, respectively^[20]
- ✓ Reliable and valid in a range of cultural groups and different populations
- ✓ Particularly useful in primary health care settings
- ✓ Brief and easy to administer
- ✓ Easy to score and interpret

Psychometric properties:

- Considered the most sensitive of the currently available screening tools for alcohol^[21]
- Items have high internal consistency and test-retest reliability^[7]
- Demonstrated good construct validity^[7]
- Recommended for use in the general population and is available in 37 languages^[2, 22]
- A systematic review^[23] found:
 - Amongst adults (N= 7 studies), sensitivity: 0.38-0.73 (95%CI: 0.33-0.84); specificity: 0.89-0.97 (95%CI: 0.84-0.98)
 - Amongst older adults, pregnant women and adolescents, positive predictive value ranged from 26%-46%

Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test – Consumption (AUDIT-C)

Please tick (✓) one box for each question

Q1. How often do you have a drink containing alcohol?

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Never (skip to Q's 9-10) | Monthly or less | 2-4 times a month | 2-3 times a week | 4 times or more a week |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0 | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 |

Q2. How many drinks of alcohol do you drink on a typical day when you are drinking?

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 - 2 | 3 or 4 | 5 or 6 | 7, 8 or 9 | 10 or more |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0 | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 |

Q3. How often have you had six or more units on one occasion?

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Never | Less than monthly | Monthly | Weekly | Daily or almost daily |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0 | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 |

Q4. How often during the last year have you found that you were not able to stop drinking once you had started?

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Never | Less than monthly | Monthly | weekly | Daily or almost daily |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0 | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 |

Q5. How often during the last year have you failed to do what was normally expected from you because of drinking?

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Never | Less than monthly | Monthly | weekly | Daily or almost daily |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0 | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 |

Q6. How often during the last year have you been unable to remember what happened the night before because you had been drinking?

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Never | Less than monthly | Monthly | weekly | Daily or almost daily |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0 | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 |

Q7. How often during the last year have you needed an alcoholic drink first thing in the morning to get yourself going after a night of heavy drinking?

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Never | Less than monthly | Monthly | weekly | Daily or almost daily |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0 | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 |

Q8. How often during the last year have you had a feeling of guilt or remorse after drinking?

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Never | Less than monthly | Monthly | weekly | Daily or almost daily |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0 | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 |

Q9. Have you or someone else been injured as a result of your drinking?

| | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| No | Yes, but not in the past year | Yes, during the past year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 |

Q10. Has a relative, friend, doctor, or another health professional expressed concern about your drinking or suggested you cut down?

| | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| No | Yes, but not in the past year | Yes, during the past year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 |

Total Score

Administrator, Rater, Scoring and Interpretation

Administrator: Clinician/Worker
Self-complete
Online

Rater: Client

Scoring & interpretation: The AUDIT consists of ten questions.

Questions 1 to 8 are each scored 0, 1, 2, 3, or 4 points. Questions 9 and ten are each scored 0, 2, or 4 points.

A total score is obtained by summing points obtained for each of the ten questions. The minimum total score possible is 0, and the maximum total score possible is 40 (i.e. total score range: 0-40).

AUDIT score interpretation

| Score | Interpretation |
|------------|--|
| 8-15 | Simple advice focused on reducing hazardous drinking |
| 16-19 | Brief counselling and continued monitoring |
| 20 or more | Warrant further diagnostic evaluation for alcohol dependence |

Resources

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Tool citation: | Saunders, J.B., Aasland, O.G., Amundsen, A., et al. <i>Alcohol consumption and related problems among primary health care patients: WHO Collaborative Project on Early Detection of Persons with Harmful Alcohol Consumption</i> . <i>Addiction</i> , 1993. 88(3): 349–362. |
| Copyright: | Available for use with appropriate citation. |
| Training/manual: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manual available: https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/67205. • Training is not required. |
| Brief intervention: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary care: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Babor, T.F., Higgins-Biddle, J.C., Saunders, J.B. et al. <i>AUDIT, The Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test: Guidelines for use in Primary Care</i>. 2001, World Health Organization – www.pps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/67205/WHO_MSD_MSB_01.6a.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y. • Haber, P., Lintzeris, N., Proude, E., et al. <i>Guidelines for the Treatment of Alcohol Problems</i>. 2009, Commonwealth of Australia: Canberra – www.drugsandalcohol.ie/20201/1/Gudelines_for_treatment_of_alcohol_problems.pdf. • Pregnant women: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol and Pregnancy Project, <i>Alcohol and pregnancy: health professionals making a difference</i>. 2007, Telethon Institute for Child Health Research: Perth – www.alcoholthinkagain.com.au/Portals/0/documents/Alcohol%20and%20pregnancy%20-%20A%20resource%20for%20health%20professionals.pdf. • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cusack, L. and C. de Crespigny, <i>Alcohol Treatment Guidelines for Indigenous Australians</i>. 2007, Department of Health and Ageing: Canberra – file:///C:/Users/fisc0044/AppData/Local/Downloads/1511831665_Alcohol%20Treatment%20Guidelines%20for%20Indigenous%20Australians.pdf |
| Other: | AUDIT Manual: https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/67205 . |

Knowledge Gaps

The AUDIT is probably the most widely cited and recommended instrument to detect alcohol use, hazardous consumption and risky drinking in Australia. There are numerous publications reporting on its validity and veracity (see <https://auditscreen.org/>).

Reviews are recommended to:

- Map how the AUDIT has been taken up and implemented across Australia, including in social, welfare and community settings
- Examine the utility of the AUDIT as a patient-reported outcome measure
- Better understand the service provider context of how, why and for whom the AUDIT works, and in what circumstances.

References

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