

## CCSA releases new Guidance on Alcohol and Health

Drinking three to six standard alcoholic beverages per week increases a person's risk of developing several types of cancer, while having seven or more drinks a week significantly increases the risk of heart disease and stroke.

That's according to the newly released "Canada's Guidance on Alcohol and Health," which replaces the 2011 Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines.

The bottom line of the updated guidance is that when it comes to alcohol and health, less is better.

Key takeaways from the document include:

- There is a continuum of risk associated with weekly alcohol use where the risk of harm is:
  - Zero drinks per week — Not drinking has benefits, such as better health, and better sleep;
  - Two standard drinks or less per week — You're likely to avoid alcohol-related consequences for yourself or others at this level;
  - Three to six standard drinks per week — Your risk of developing several types of cancer, including breast and colon cancer, increases at this level;
  - Seven standard drinks or more per week — Your risk of heart disease or stroke increases significantly at this level;
  - Each additional standard drink radically increases the risk of alcohol-related consequences.
- Consuming more than two standard drinks per occasion is associated with an increased risk of harms to self and others, including injuries and violence.
- When pregnant or trying to get pregnant, there is no known safe amount of alcohol use.
- When breastfeeding, not drinking alcohol is safest.

The new guidance supports people in making informed decisions about their health. It meets people where they are at and gives them an opportunity to evaluate their drinking patterns.

The Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction led the initiative to update Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines, with funding from Health Canada. The project began in July 2020.

The full report can be found on the CCSA website. [Link to full document.](#)