Guideline for Alcohol and Substance Use Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral to Treatment (SBIRT)

Why screen for alcohol and drug use?

Brief motivational conversations with patients can promote significant, lasting reduction in risky use of alcohol and other drugs. Nearly 30% of adult Americans engage in unhealthy use of alcohol and/or other drugs, yet very few are identified or participate in a conversation that could prevent injury, disease or more severe use disorders.

Brief Screening

Frequency:
- Tobacco: Every visit.
- Alcohol and Drugs: At least yearly; consider screening at every visit.† Consider more frequent screening for women who are pregnant or who are contemplating pregnancy; adolescents; and those with high levels of psychosocial stressors.

Youth (ages 11-17 years)

See CRAFFT Toolkit for youth information, talking points, tools and more at http://healthteamworks-media.precis5.com/sbirt-crafft-toolkit

Adults (18+ years old)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Substance</th>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Positive Screen</th>
<th>Negative Screen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. When was the last time you had 4 or more (for men &gt;65 years and all women) or 5 or more (for men ≤65 years) drinks in one day?</td>
<td>OR 2. In the past 3 months.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drugs‡</td>
<td>In the past year, have you used or experimented with an illegal drug or a prescription drug for nonmedical reasons?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>See “For all patients, consider:”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco</td>
<td>Do you currently smoke or use any form of tobacco?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For all patients, consider:

- Any alcohol use is a positive screen for patients under 21 yrs. or pregnant women.§
- Potential for alcohol-exposed pregnancy in women of childbearing age; assess for effective contraception use.$
- Alcohol/medication interactions.
- Chronic disease/alcohol precautions.
- Role of substance use in depression and other mental health conditions.¶
- Medical marijuana use.

A standard drink is:

One drink = 12 oz. beer, 5 oz. wine, 1½ oz. liquor

Tobacco use only: see page 2 for Tobacco Advise and Refer.

Further Screening

Patients with a positive brief screen should receive further screening/assessment using a validated screening tool. Scoring instructions are on each tool. Screening tools in English and Spanish available at www.healthteamworks.org/guidelines/sbirt.html

Screening tools:
- AUDIT (adult alcohol use) http://healthteamworks-media.precis5.com/sbirt-audit
- DAST-10© (adult drug use) http://healthteamworks-media.precis5.com/sbirt-dast-10
- ASSIST (adult poly-substance use) http://healthteamworks-media.precis5.com/sbirt-assist
- CRAFFT (adolescent alcohol and drug use) http://healthteamworks-media.precis5.com/sbirt-crafft

Low risk: Provide positive reinforcement
Moderate risk: Provide brief intervention
Moderate-high risk: Provide referral to brief therapy
High risk: Refer to treatment

STEP 3 (page 2)

‡ See Prescription Drug Misuse supplement at www.healthteamworks.org/guidelines/sbirt.html
§ See Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) supplement, Preconception and Intercurrence Care Guideline, and Contraception Guideline at www.healthteamworks.org.
¶ See Depression in Adults: Diagnosis and Treatment Guideline at www.healthteamworks.org/guidelines/depression.html

This guideline is designed to assist clinicians with alcohol and substance use screening and management. It is not intended to replace a clinician’s judgment or establish a protocol for all patients. For national recommendations, references and additional copies of the guideline, go to www.healthteamworks.org or call (303) 446-7200. This guideline was supported with funds from SBIRT Colorado. Approved September 2011.
**Brief Intervention - Brief Therapy - Referral to Treatment**

For more information, demonstration videos, an online training module and the CRAFFT Toolkit with adolescent talking points, go to [www.healthteamworks.org](http://www.healthteamworks.org).

A Brief Intervention is a short motivational conversation to educate and promote health behavior change. **Important:** Recognize a person's readiness to change and respond accordingly.

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**Brief Intervention** (Brief Negotiated Interview model): This model may also be used to address other substance use.

1. **Raise the subject.**
   - “Would you mind if we talked for a few minutes about your alcohol use?”
   - Ask permission.
   - Avoid arguing or confrontation.

2. **Provide feedback.**
   - “We know that drinking above certain levels can cause problems such as...”
   - Review reported substance use amounts and patterns.
   - Provide information about substance use and health.
   - Advise to cut down or abstain.
   - Compare the person's alcohol use to general adult population (see drinking pyramid below).
   - “What do you think about this information?”
   - Elicit patient's response.

3. **Enhance motivation.**
   - “What do you like about your current level of drinking? What do you not like about your current level of drinking?”
   - “On a scale from 0-10, how important is it for you to decrease your drinking?”
   - “What makes you a 5 and not a lower number?”
   - “On a scale from 0-10, how ready are you to decrease your drinking?”
   - “What would make you more ready to make a change?”
   - Assess readiness to change.
   - Discuss pros and cons.
   - Explore ambivalence.

4. **Negotiate and advise.**
   - “What's the next step?”
   - “What are the barriers you anticipate in meeting this goal? How do you plan to overcome these barriers?”
   - “On a scale from 0-10, how confident are you that you will be able to make this change?”
   - “What might help you feel more confident?”
   - Negotiate goal.
   - Provide advice and information.
   - Summarize next steps and thank the patient.

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**U.S. Adult Alcohol Use Estimate**

Potential consequences of risky drinking: multiple health, work and family issues

- **Alcohol dependent**
- **Risky drinkers**
- **Abstainers or low-risk drinkers**

**Referral to treatment**

**U.S. Adult Alcohol Use Estimate**

- **Alcohol dependent**
- **Risky drinkers**
- **Abstainers or low-risk drinkers**

**Screening**  Brief Intervention  Brief Therapy  Specialty Treatment

**Referral information in Colorado:** [http://linkingcare.org](http://linkingcare.org)

**Tobacco Advise and Refer:**

Ask permission, then advise every tobacco user to quit with a personalized health message.

**Colorado QuitLine and Other Programs**

Refer individuals age 15+ to the Colorado QuitLine (1-800-QUIT-NOW [1-800-784-8669] or [www.coquitline.org](http://www.coquitline.org)):

- Personally tailored quit program
- Five scheduled, telephone-based coaching sessions
- May include free nicotine replacement therapy (age 18+ and medically eligible)

Information on programs for specific populations and ages: [www.myquitpath.com](http://www.myquitpath.com)

Order free tools and materials: [www.cohealthresources.com](http://www.cohealthresources.com)

**Pharmacotherapy options:** HealthTeamWorks Tobacco Cessation and Secondhand Smoke Exposure Guideline at [www.healthteamworks.org/guidelines/tobacco.html](http://www.healthteamworks.org/guidelines/tobacco.html)

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**Brief Therapy:** For moderate to high risk use of alcohol or drugs

- Motivational discussion; focused on empowerment and goal setting
- Includes assessment, education, problem-solving, coping strategies, supportive social environment
- Typically 4-6 sessions, each one approached as though it could be the last

**Substance Use Disorder Treatment:** For high risk alcohol or drug use

- Proactive process to facilitate access to specialty care
- Focus on motivating a person to follow-up on referral for further assessment and possible treatment
- Appropriate level of care may include inpatient, outpatient, residential
- Pharmacotherapy options: [www.healthteamworks.org/guidelines/sbirt.html](http://www.healthteamworks.org/guidelines/sbirt.html)

**Referral information in Colorado:** [http://linkingcare.org](http://linkingcare.org)

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**SBIRT is reimbursable if:**

- A validated screening tool is used
- It is properly documented
- Time requirement is met

See [www.healthteamworks.org](http://www.healthteamworks.org) for up-to-date information.

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**SBIRT should be documented like any other healthcare service.**

- These records may require special permission for release. Consult your organization's privacy policy.
- Documented use of a validated screening tool (e.g., AUDIT, DAST, CRAFFT, ASSIST) required for reimbursement.

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