

8

benefits  
of  
moderate  
drinking

A romantic scene of a man and a woman sitting on a wooden dock by a lake at sunset. The man is wearing a grey t-shirt and the woman is wearing a grey sweater. In the foreground, there is a bottle of red wine and two glasses filled with red wine. The background shows a calm lake reflecting the warm orange and yellow light of the setting sun.

Moderating your drinking is not that difficult. Honestly!

Especially when there are so many benefits to motivate you. It's a win-win situation: you get to enjoy the pleasures of moderate drinking while avoiding the problems that come with alcohol abuse.

You're much better off drinking regularly and moderately than occasionally and heavily.

Remember:  
Drink better, not more!

# What exactly is moderation?

Moderation is simple. Just remember these numbers: **2 • 3 • 4 • 0**.

The research is conclusive: women should limit their drinking to **2 drinks a day**, and no more than 10 a week. For men, the limit is **3 drinks a day** and 15 a week. On special occasions, women can have 3 drinks, and men, 4. And everyone should abstain from drinking at least one, and ideally two, days a week.



2.3.4.0



# What exactly is one drink?

There is the same amount of alcohol in one serving of beer (340 ml/12 oz, 5% alcohol) as there is in one serving of wine (140 ml/5 oz, 12% alcohol), one serving of fortified wine (85 ml/3 oz, 20% alcohol) or one serving of spirits (45 ml/1.5 oz, 40% alcohol). Each of these is considered a **standard serving**, or “**one drink.**” As for cider, malt liquors and premixed drinks, you need to know the alcohol percentage, as indicated on the bottle. This can vary from 2.5% to 20%.



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**Glass of beer**  
340 ml/12 oz  
5% alc./vol.

**Glass of wine**  
140 ml/5 oz  
12% alc./vol.

**Glass of fortified wine**  
85 ml/3 oz  
20% alc./vol.

**Glass of spirits**  
45 ml/1,5 oz  
40% alc./vol.

**Glasses of cider**  
140 ml/5 oz  
6% alc./vol.

And it is  
absolutely true  
that there are  
many benefits to  
drinking moderately.  
Here are 8 of them.

# 1

## Better Sleep

You might think that one or more drinks at bedtime would help you sleep. While it's true that alcohol usually helps you fall asleep and stay asleep for the first few hours, it actually disturbs sleep patterns: it can cause wakefulness during the night, and sometimes makes you wake up early in the morning and prevents you from falling asleep again. Not to mention that alcohol relaxes the muscles of the respiratory tract, making you more likely to snore. Sticking to the recommended drinking limits lets you—and anyone else in the bed—rest easy!

For more information, see  
***Alcohol and Sleep***



A middle-aged man with grey hair and glasses, wearing a blue dress shirt and a patterned tie, is smiling broadly. He is sitting at a white desk with a white coffee cup on a saucer in front of him. A smartphone is visible on the desk to the left. The background is a bright, out-of-focus office setting with green plants.

# No More Hangovers

How sweet it is to wake up without a headache or a hangover! Drinking too much affects almost every part of the body, and the organs under attack have to defend themselves. While reactions and their severity vary from one person to the next, drinking moderately and limiting your intake of artificially sweetened alcoholic beverages definitely minimizes the adverse effects. Sticking to the recommended drinking limits means waking up fresh the next day.

For more information, see  
***Alcohol Hangover***

# 3

## Improved Fitness

Even though, in Quebec, as is common around the world, nearly all sports are sponsored by alcoholic beverage companies, this doesn't mean that alcohol and sports go well together. In fact, it's better when they keep their distance from each other. Alcohol is no help either in preparing for or recovering from physical activity. The fact is, drinking alcohol before or during sports reduces your endurance and may increase the risk of injury. Also, drinking right after working out or playing sports prevents the body from recovering properly because alcohol affects various metabolic processes and overall well-being. So wait until well after you're done to have a drink. Sticking to the recommended drinking limits means you'll stay in better shape!

For more information, see  
***Alcohol and Physical Activity***



# 4

## Better Weight Management

All alcoholic beverages are made either by fermenting natural sugars from fruits or grains or by distilling those fermented beverages. It doesn't matter whether you're drinking wine (95-225 calories per serving) or beer (90-220 calories per serving): there are about 7 calories in every gram of alcohol, and then you have to take into account the calories from any sugar or fruit juice added to your drink. What's more, alcohol slows the elimination of fat, since the calories from alcohol are burned very quickly – before the calories from fat. Drinking thus promotes the accumulation of fat, mainly belly fat, which is common among heavy drinkers. Sticking to the recommended drinking limits will help you keep your weight under control!

For more information, see  
***Low-risk Drinking: 2•3•4•0***



# 5

## More Designated Driver Options

In Quebec, moderation is a well-established and socially accepted cultural value. Impaired driving is on the decline, particularly thanks to the increasing use of designated drivers. However, the same person often has to be the designated driver, over and over. Wouldn't it be nice to have other options? If everyone sticks to the recommended drinking limits, then everyone can manage their blood alcohol content better, and more people can serve as designated drivers.



A young girl with blonde hair, wearing a blue dress with orange pom-poms at the hem, is jumping joyfully in the air with her arms outstretched. In the background, a man with a mustache, wearing a blue polo shirt and khaki pants, is sitting on a light-colored sofa, looking up at the girl while holding a tablet. The setting is a bright, modern living room with large windows and a wooden shelving unit.

# Increased Patience

In small quantities, alcohol may make you feel happy, confident and relaxed. But drinking a lot is more likely to make you feel sad, depressed, irritable and increasingly impatient. Everyone reacts differently to alcohol, which can bring out certain negative traits in some people, making them a lot less patient with friends, co-workers and anyone else around them. Sticking to the recommended drinking limits minimizes these unpleasant behavioural impacts: when you're in a better mood, the general atmosphere tends to improve, too.

# 7

## Quality Over Quantity

You may have heard the expression, “The more you drink, the less you taste.” It’s true. Excessive drinking has a direct impact on your physical and mental ability to taste and appreciate what you’re drinking. It also has an impact on your wallet. When you stick to the recommended drinking guidelines, you can afford to drink better products and prioritize quality over quantity.





# Greater Ability to Concentrate

If you exceed the recommended drinking guidelines, you risk experiencing a gradual decline in attentiveness, concentration and judgment, which may extend into the next day. This is one of the characteristic effects of excessive drinking, even when it is occasional. Regular heavy drinking can have an even more significant impact on cognitive abilities and, in combination with other factors, it can affect concentration in an ongoing way. Sticking to the recommended drinking guidelines helps you focus on what you're doing.

For more information, see *Drinking Games Can Be Deadly (A summary of the progressive effects of alcohol)*



**STANDARD DRINK**

**2-3-4-0**

**NUMBER  
OF DRINKS**



**BLOOD ALCOHOL  
CALCULATOR**



**CALCOHOLATOR**



**ALTERNALCOHOL**

For more information or to read  
the publications mentioned in this brochure,  
please visit [educalcoool.qc.ca](http://educalcoool.qc.ca).



Moderation is always in good taste.