



# What the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines Say About Alcohol

“For those who choose to drink, moderate alcohol consumption can be incorporated into the calorie limits of most healthy eating patterns.”



If alcohol is consumed, it should be in moderation—up to **ONE DRINK PER DAY FOR WOMEN** and up to **TWO DRINKS PER DAY FOR MEN**—and only by adults of legal drinking age.

Over the course of a week, low-risk drinking is defined as no more than 7 drinks for women and no more than 14 drinks for men, according to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. Some people should avoid alcohol completely, including those who take medications that interact with alcohol, have a medical condition that alcohol can aggravate or are pregnant.

## Calculating Drink-Equivalents

Packaged and mixed beverages vary in alcohol content.

### HOW TO CALCULATE DRINK-EQUIVALENTS:

Volume of beverage in ounces  $\times$  Alcohol content in percent ABV\*

0.6 fluid ounces of alcohol per drink-equivalent

## A Beer Is Not A Martini



12 fl. oz. beer at 4.2% ABV

12 fl. oz.  $\times$  0.042 =  
0.50 fl. oz. ethanol  $\div$  0.6  
= **0.8 drink-equivalents**

**BEER**



3 oz. gin at 40% ABV  
0.5 oz. dry vermouth at 40% ABV

3.5 fl. oz. spirits  $\times$  0.4 =  
1.4 fl. oz. ethanol  $\div$  0.6  
= **2.3 drink-equivalents**

**ORIGINAL MARTINI**



# What the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines say about Variability in Alcohol Content

## DISTILLED SPIRITS

Depending on factors such as the type of spirits and the recipe, one mixed drink can contain a variable number of drink-equivalents. Research shows that when served, many mixed drinks are likely to contain up to 300 percent more alcohol than the amount found in a customary serving of beer.

(Gual 1999; Gills 2004; Kerr 2008; Kerr 2012)

1.5 FL OZ 80 PROOF 40% ALCOHOL  1

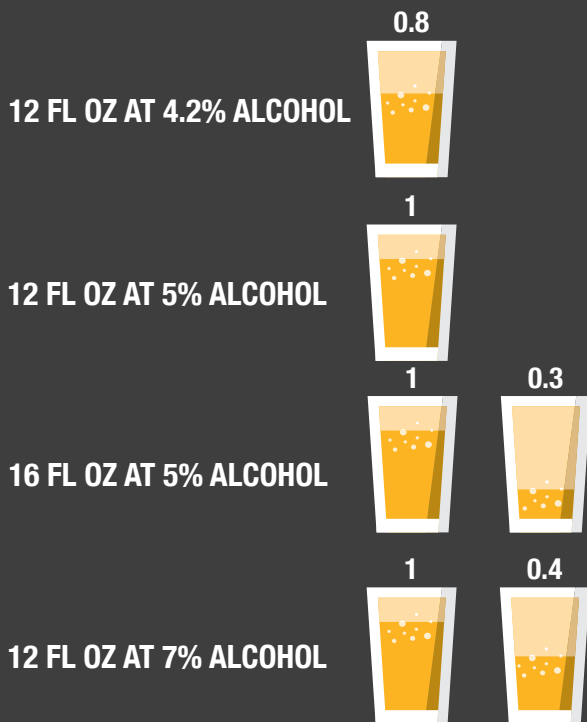
MIXED DRINK WITH MORE THAN 1.5 FL OZ 80 PROOF DISTILLED SPIRITS 40% ALCOHOL  >1

MAI TAI  2.7 =  1  1  0.7

MANHATTAN OR COSMOPOLITAN  2 =  1  1

## BEER, BEER COOLERS AND MALT BEVERAGES

A substantial portion of alcohol consumption in the U.S. is represented by light beer, which typically contains the lowest amount of alcohol per 12 ounces as shown below.



## WINE

