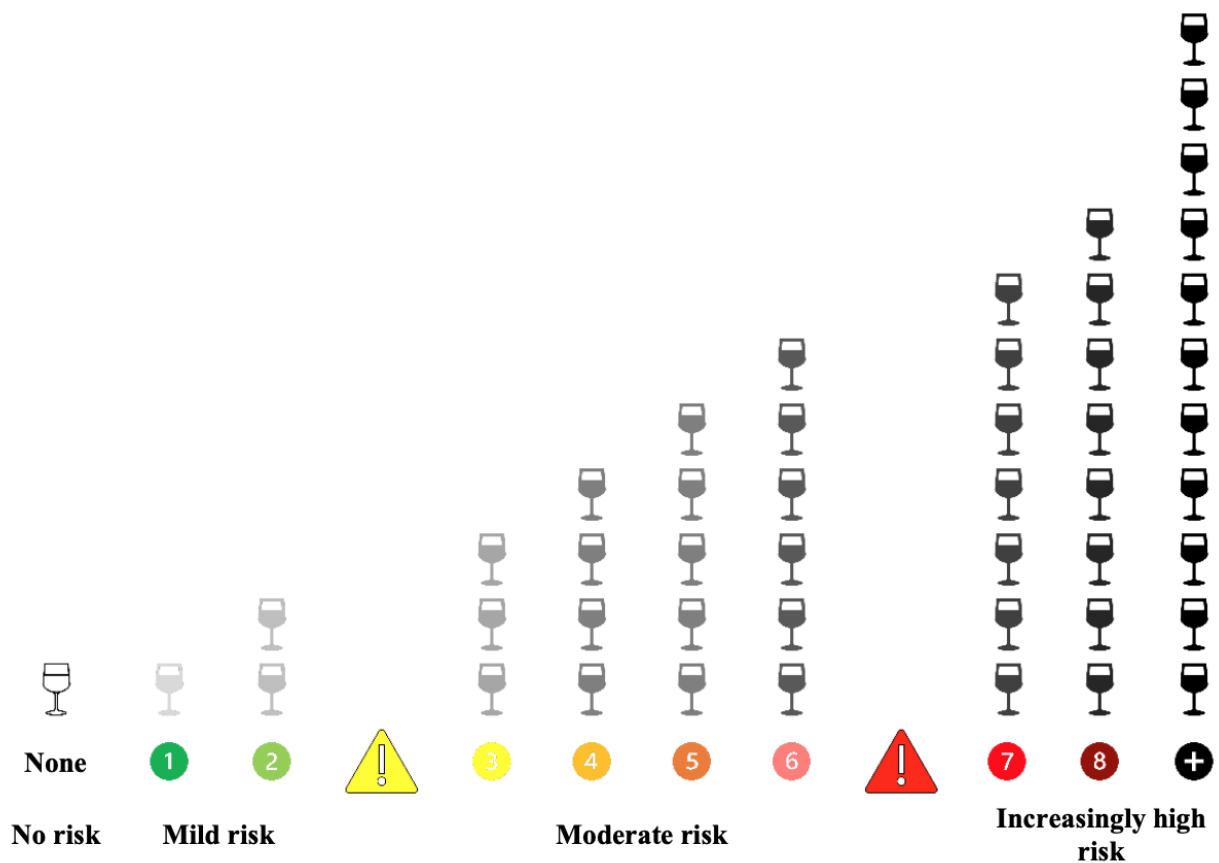


## Changing How We Think About Alcohol

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As we head into a new year, 2022 isn't the only thing we are saying goodbye to. It is out with the old and in with the new for Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines. In August 2022, the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction published an updated report summarizing the most current and accurate evidence about the risks and harms associated with alcohol use. The official release of Canada's new Guidance on Alcohol and Health is coming in January 2023. Previous recommendations stated that you would be reducing your long-term health risks by drinking no more than ten drinks a week for women, with no more than two drinks a day most days, and no more than 15 drinks a week for men, with no more than three drinks a day most days. However, we now know that even in small quantities, alcohol is not good for your health, so it is time to rethink the way we drink!



The risk of alcohol-related consequences increases with the number of drinks you have **per week**.

### Consequences of drinking

- Having two or fewer drinks per week should allow you to avoid negative alcohol consequences.
- If you have three to six drinks per week, you are increasing your risk of developing certain cancers, including breast and colon cancer.

- If you have seven drinks or more per week, you are increasing your risk of developing a heart disease or having a stroke.
- And with each additional drink your risk of having these health problems, and many other diseases and injuries, exponentially increases – all of which can shorten your life.



The start of a new year brings with it a time for reflection. For many, we pause to think about what goals we would like to focus on for the year ahead. Thus, as the festive season draws to a close, a period when many spend time celebrating with family and friends, I invite you to consider the place and role that alcohol had in your festivities. What would you like your pattern of alcohol use to look like moving forward? In 2023, let’s aim to drink less – care to join?

### Tips to reduce drinking

- Keep track of how many drinks you have per week and use this value to help set a weekly drinking target
- Stick to the limits you have set for yourself
- Choose drinks with a lower percentage of alcohol
- Drink slowly in small sips
- For every alcoholic drink, have one non-alcoholic drink
- Try some alcohol-free cocktail recipes

**Reference:** <https://ccsa.ca/sites/default/files/2022-08/CCSA-LRDG-Update-of-Canada%27s-LRDG-Final-report-for-public-consultation-en.pdf>