

# Comparison of two Internet-based interventions for problem drinkers: Randomized controlled trial

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## Purpose

- ◆ Efficacy of CheckYourDrinking.net to reduce alcohol consumption supported by 4 RCTs
- ◆ Current study evaluated whether additional online help can lead to greater reductions in drinking

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# Check Your Drinking screener

◆ [www.checkyourdrinking.net](http://www.checkyourdrinking.net)

■ 18 Item Survey Contains:

- ◆ AUDIT
- ◆ Drinking on each day of a typical week
- ◆ Greatest amount on a single occasion
- ◆ Experience of psychosocial consequences
- ◆ Demographics

◆ Normative comparison data for USA, Canada and United Kingdom

# CheckYourDrinking.net 2.0

The screenshot displays the 'Check Your Drinking' survey interface. It is divided into several sections:

- Page 1 of 4:** Includes a language selector (English (CA)), a 'Start the Survey' button, and a 'Please Note' section regarding research purposes and professional use.
- Page 3 of 4:** Features a 'One Standard Drink' icon and a calendar for selecting a date. It contains questions 6 through 10 regarding drinking frequency and quantity.
- Page 4 of 4: How Your Drinking Effects Your Lifestyle:** Contains questions 11 through 18, which assess the impact of alcohol on social life, physical health, happiness, home life, work, and financial position.

Navigation buttons for 'Back' and 'Next' are visible between pages. At the bottom, there is a 'Click Here to Generate Your Final Report' button and a footer with copyright information for V-CC Systems Inc. (2001-8).

# CYD Final Report

**CHECK YOUR DRINKING**

Final Report For Trevor

The average number of drinks you consume to reach 0.05% less than the average for your age (20% less than)

Within the last week (12) you:

- You reported drinking
- You reported that you:

This also means that:

- You report approximately
- You consumed an amount of alcohol to add and 2,000 calories to
- You also reported that

Your Drinking Patterns

The following graph outlines:

**Heavy Drinking Days**

How often do you make from drinking fit into the chart:

**AUDIT Score**

The AUDIT questionnaire was developed to assess whether a person's drinking is the shape of a potential to show's your AUDIT score is 14. Based on score falls:

Audit score (risk of AUD)

**Health Effects of Alcohol**

We've included the following information in the event that you would like to learn more about how the use of alcohol can affect your health.

Your liver

Because the liver receives blood directly from the intestines, it takes the brunt of high alcohol concentrations. Heavy alcohol consumption can lead to two serious types of liver injury: hepatic inflammation (alcohol hepatitis) and progressive liver scarring (fibrosis or cirrhosis). (Cheadle et al 1991; Dubour et al 1992)

Women are more at risk to serious alcohol-related liver injury; they develop cirrhosis at a lower dose of alcohol than men do. (Marbet et al 1987)

**Reducing Your Risk**

There are many things that you can do to reduce the risk of hurting yourself or others. Here are some small steps you can take to start making a change:

- Don't drink in any situation where there's a risk of accident or injury — for example, drinking and driving.
- Don't mix alcohol with other drugs — especially other depressants like tranquilizers, barbiturates, heroin or other opioids.
- Try to reduce by one or two days the number of days you drink each week.
- Decide how much you will drink ahead of time and keep yourself to this limit.
- Take a limited amount of money with you if you go out to have a drink.
- Keep track of the amount you drink.
- Alternate alcoholic with non-alcoholic beverages when you drink.
- Choose alcoholic beverages with lower alcohol content.
- If you are out drinking with friends, make sure at least one person stays sober. If that person is driving they should not drink any alcohol at all.
- Do not become intoxicated with people you do not know and trust; criminal victimization is a much greater risk when you are drunk.
- Remember the need to practice safer sex — always use condoms.

Click here to log out

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This program is for educational purposes and is not to replace the advice of your family physician or other health care provider.

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# Alcohol Help Centre

■ [www.AlcoholHelpCentre.net](http://www.AlcoholHelpCentre.net)

## ◆ Toolbox

■ Contains common cognitive behavioural and relapse prevention tools used in treatment and self-help books

## ◆ Moderated Support Group

Email:    
 Password:    
[Forgot your password? Click here.](#)

ALCOHOL HELP CENTER

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### Welcome to Alcohol Help Center 2.0

Are you concerned about problem drinking? Do you think you might need to cut down or are you thinking about quitting?

**Signing up** is both free and anonymous, and gives you access to personalized exercises, tools and information that will help you:

- Assess your current (or past) drinking patterns
- Compare your drinking to others who are your same age and sex
- Prepare for cutting back or quitting and learn about personal triggers
- Track how much you drink or how long you stay abstinent with your own diary
- Set goals
- Create a reward program
- Plan ahead for emergencies or high risk situations
- Connect with or coach others in our anonymous and expert moderated Support Group
- Opt in to receive motivational email and text messages
- Create your own blog or upload your own motivational video

Without signing up you can also [Check Your Drinking](#), assess your [Blood Alcohol Concentration](#), browse the [online support group](#), or simply [learn more about problem drinking](#).

You do not have to purchase any products to use this free program. Please remember that this program is not to replace the advice of a healthcare professional.

#### TODAY'S TOP DISCUSSIONS

**Drinking and Sex**  
Faryal - Bilingual H  
28/10/2008 11:16:00 AM

**Last drink was Oct. 15th**  
SusickOfTns  
27/10/2008 7:50:00 PM

**Myth or Fact?**  
Breanne, Bilingual H  
27/10/2008 1:23:00 PM

#### HOW CAN WE HELP YOU?

- [I'd like to register](#)
- [I'd like to learn more about AHC tools](#)
- [I'd like to take the Check Your Drinking assessment](#)
- [I'd like to browse the Online Support Group](#)
- [I'd like to learn more about Problem Drinking](#)

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**Interactive Tools**

- Blood Alcohol Calculator
- Member Goals
- Email Program
- Text Message Tips
- Daily Diary

**Getting Started**

- Do I Drink Too Much?
- Check Your Drinking
- The First Two Weeks
- Cutting Back
- Cost And Benefits
- Triggers
- High Risk Situations
- Changing The Rules
- Rewarding Yourself
- Member Goal

**Dealing With Difficulties**

- Dealing With Desires
- Saying No Thanks
- New Relationships
- Medications
- Tracking Temptations
- Emergency Plan

**Maintenance**

- Support Team
- Keeping Active
- Healthy Eating
- Coping With Stress

### John's Toolbox

October 28, 2008

- [Program Guide](#)
- [Post in the Support Group](#)
- [Change Your Personal Profile](#)
- [Change Your Goal](#)

To complete an exercise, click on any exercise title in the left hand menu. Once you complete an exercise you can revisit the exercise to review your answers (you can redo exercises whenever you like).

**Remember:** you're free to choose to complete, redo or revisit any exercise or interactive component in this program. After you turn on your [email program](#) or [text message tips](#) or, you can always [opt out](#).

As you move through the program and progress through the interactive exercises please share your experiences with other members in the anonymous [Support Group](#). And as you move forward in the program, perhaps you can share your wisdom and success by supporting someone else?

**What should my goal be?**  
There are many different reasons why people have difficulty with drinking. These could include life transitions, physical predispositions or any number of life circumstances. Problem drinking means different things to different people. Signs and symptoms also vary. Some may experience more severe symptoms than others while for some, the signs and symptoms can come-and-go over time.

However we do know that by adopting the strategies outlined in this program you can begin to feel healthy and control your drinking, rather than having your drinking control you.

What's really important is that you're here. This shows that you want to do something about your health. Not everyone shows the initiative that you have – so congratulations!

#### Quote of the Day:

You can have anything you want if you want it desperately enough. You must want it with an inner exuberance that erupts through the skin and joins the energy that created the world.  
- Sheila Graham

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### Welcome to the Alcohol Help Center Support Group!

If you're looking for advice, if you have some questions or if you need help getting through the rough spots the Alcohol Help Center Support Group is for you!

If you'd like to ask a question or participate in discussions we ask that you register for our [program](#). Registration is free and it protects our community from spam. Once you register, you must log in to post. Please review our [User Agreement](#).

This Support Group is moderated by health care professionals. If you would like to contact our health educators or read their biographies, please click [here](#).

V-CC Systems Inc. offers a free online alcohol cessation program and online Social Network developed by doctors and researchers and moderated by Health Educators. In return, V-CC Systems Inc. collects and analyzes anonymous, cumulative demographic and utilization data. The data collected is only used to validate the effectiveness of our software and may be published in scientific journals.

There are currently 1 members [logged in](#) and 51 guests browsing.  
 There are currently 0 members [logged in](#) to the AHC Support Group Instant Messenger.  
 Please welcome our newest members: Tim, Friday, Changing1

[Today's Active Discussions](#)  
[Search Messages](#) | [Personal Profile](#)  
[Support Group Options](#)

The new and improved AHC Instant Messenger: Click to [LAUNCH](#) My Blog [LAUNCH](#)

Our Forums	Topics	Posts	Last Post
<b>NEW</b> <a href="#">Mom's Corner</a> Daily thoughts, facts and discussion items. What's your take?	292	311	<a href="#">Drinking and Sex</a> by <b>Faryal - Bilingual H</b> Oct 28, 2008 @ 11:16 AM
<a href="#">Introduce Yourself</a> Introduce yourself to the group.	183	1341	<a href="#">Hi, I am Bob</a> by <b>Breanne, Bilingual Health Educator</b> Oct 27, 2008 @ 12:55 PM
<a href="#">Questions about the Alcohol Help Center (AHC) and AHC Tools</a> Education is power!	40	119	<a href="#">Anyone ever read about TH...</a> by <b>Sarah, Health Educator</b> Oct 17, 2008 @ 7:59 PM
<a href="#">Setting Your Goals</a> Helping you set your strategy for cutting down or stopping entirely	47	160	<a href="#">Worrying about relapse?</a> by <b>Breanne, Bilingual Health Educator</b> Oct 27, 2008 @ 12:57 PM
<a href="#">Dealing with Urgees</a> Advice, support and strategies	59	274	<a href="#">Not looking back</a> by <b>am1968</b> Oct 21, 2008 @ 5:54 AM
<b>NEW</b> <a href="#">Success Stories</a> Tell us about your success! Support and inspire others!	25	200	<a href="#">Last drink was Oct. 15th</a> by <b>SoSickOFFthis</b> Oct 27, 2008 @ 7:50 PM

**NEW** - messages since your last visit on October 27, 2008 (1:35 PM)

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Home / [Introduce Yourself](#) / Hi, I'm Paula.

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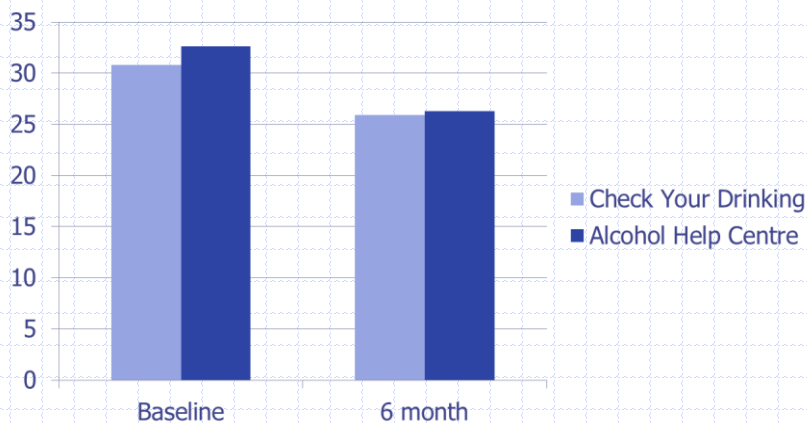
Posted By	Message Date	
<a href="#">PaulaP</a>	Oct 20, 2008 (02:57 AM)	<a href="#">Reply</a>   <a href="#">Quote</a>
Posts: 2 Joined: Oct 20, 2008 <a href="#">Add to Buddy List</a>	Hi Everyone, just wanted to introduce myself. My names Paula and I'm 26. I've been an alcoholic for about 3 years now and I'm sick of the hold booze has over me. I can't even remember why I started drinking so heavily - and now it's so hard to stop because of the anxiety/withdrawal symptoms... but I'm so glad I found this website!  I read a little about taking vitamins - and have been trying to do more research. I'm terrified of having a seizure or even getting the DT's. I tried to quit and have been successful multiple times but only for a day or two... then the 'shakes' get really bad. So I am taking B vitamins and working on the glass of water between drinks techniques. This week I hope to increase my glasses of water to two. I'm hoping by cutting back slowly the withdrawal symptoms will be less severe. Has anyone else tried this?  I know I have a rough road ahead, but I'm glad to be part of a supportive group.	
<i>"The potential for changing the future can lie only in the present."</i>		
<a href="#">SoSickOffthis</a>	Oct 20, 2008 (09:35 AM)	<a href="#">Reply</a>   <a href="#">Quote</a>
Posts: 9 Joined: Oct 16, 2008 Gender: Female Country: Canada <a href="#">Add to Buddy List</a>	Hi Paula,  I as well am new to the site and I was drinking heavily for 3 years.  I think you'll find reading the posts helpful and knowing you are not alone in these struggles. My uncle had DT's when he quit drinking, so for him they recommended he not go through withdrawals alone as there'd be no way to secure medical treatment, if you're comfortable with it maybe you should talk to a doctor. Mind you, my uncle was a heavy drinker for many more than 3 years to have had to suffer through DT's.  The best part is you want to cut down, if you use the tools and visit the website often it should really benefit you.  The moderators have a lot of good information and helpful advice here.  All the best to you.	
<a href="#">Big John</a>	Oct 20, 2008 (09:36 AM)	<a href="#">Reply</a>   <a href="#">Quote</a>
Posts: 74 Joined: Oct 01, 2008 My Blog: <a href="#">Click to view</a> Age: Gender: Male Country: United States Hobbies: Exercise, bike riding, technologies <a href="#">Add to Buddy List</a>	Hi PaulaP,  Hang in there. Life gets better when you begin changing. Please keep writing and using the toolbox provided on the website.  Good Luck  Big John	

## Pilot study design

- ◆ Randomized trial: Check Your Drinking versus Alcohol Help Centre
  - Newspaper recruitment
  - 6 month follow-up
- ◆ 170 eligible participants recruited
  - 90% follow-up rate
- ◆ Analysis: MANOVA with significant Time X Condition effect,  $p < .05$

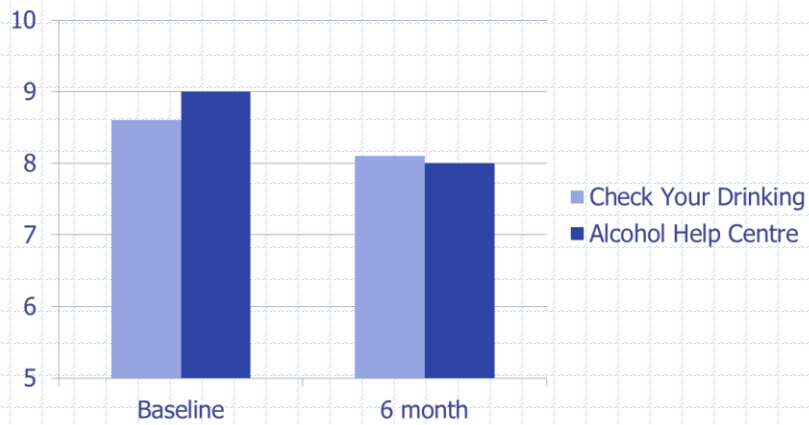
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## Drinks in a typical week



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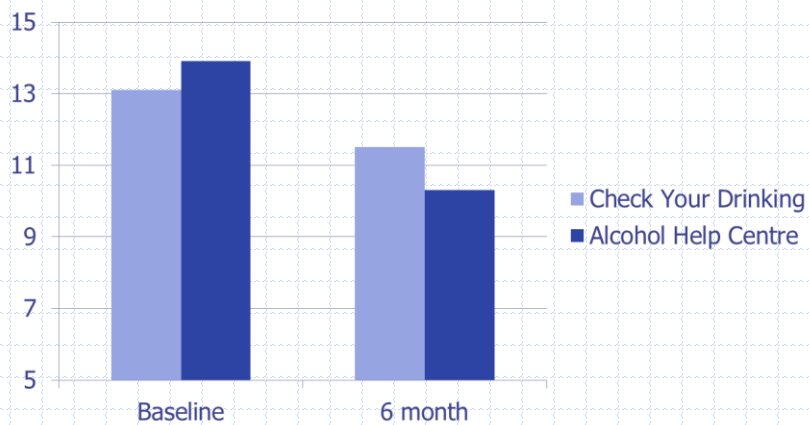
## AUDIT-C scores



Time X Condition = .06

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## Most drinks on one occasion



Time X Condition = .02

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## Issues running these studies

- ◆ One-third of people assigned to experimental condition are not accessing the website
  - Studies become one of testing the impact of providing *access* to the intervention

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## Future directions

- ◆ Randomized controlled trial with three conditions: CYD, AHC, no intervention control
  - Sustained follow-up – proposing a two year time period
  - Randomize participants to condition after they access the study website

Cunningham, J. A. (2012). Comparison of two internet-based interventions for problem drinkers: randomized controlled trial. *Journal of medical Internet research*, 14(4), e107. doi: 10.2196/jmir.2090

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