

USPSTF advises PCPs to screen adults for unhealthy alcohol use

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(HealthDay)—Screening adults, including pregnant women, and

providing brief counseling in primary care settings can reduce unhealthy alcohol use, although inadequate evidence is found to weigh the balance of benefits and harms of screening adolescents. These findings form the basis of a draft recommendation statement published online June 5 by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF).

To inform the USPSTF, Elizabeth A. O'Connor, Ph.D., from the Kaiser Permanente Center for Health Research in Portland, Ore., and colleagues conducted a systematic review of the benefits and harms of screening and nonpharmacological interventions to reduce unhealthy alcohol use. Data were included for 108 studies, with 309,534 participants.

The researchers found that clinicians in primary care settings should screen for unhealthy alcohol use in adults aged 18 years and older, including [pregnant women](#), and should provide brief behavioral counseling interventions to individuals engaged in risky or hazardous drinking (B recommendation). Insufficient evidence was found to assess the balance of benefits and harms of screening and brief behavioral counseling interventions for adolescents aged 12 to 17 years (I statement). These findings form the basis of a draft recommendation statement, which is available for public comment from June 5 to July 2, 2018.

"The Task Force once again found that [screening](#) adults and providing brief counseling in primary care settings can help detect and reduce unhealthy alcohol use," Task Force member Carol Mangione, M.D., said in a statement.

More information: [Draft Evidence Review](#)
[Draft Recommendation Statement](#)
[Comment on Recommendation](#)

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