



HCHS/SOL Question by Question Instructions, Alcohol Use Form (ALE/ALS), Version A

General Instructions

This section of the interview asks about current or former use of alcohol. Alcohol consumption comes in many forms such as beer, wine, and liquor. It is important to have some familiarity with the different forms of alcohol as you will be asking participants to estimate their total amount of alcohol consumed in a one-week period. You may be asked by the respondent to define “serving.” These serving sizes can be found just above the first alcohol question on your computer screen. The “standard drink” units are as follows: Beer = 12oz. glass or 355ml bottle; Wine = 3.5oz glass, 1 bottle = 750ml= 8 glasses; Hard spirits = 1.5oz. or 1 shot.

You may have to assist the respondent with the conversion to standard drink units in order to obtain the most accurate estimate of weekly consumption. For example, a respondent may tell you that he/she drinks 5 “pints” of beer each week. Since the standard drink unit for beer is 12 ounces some adjustment in the number of drinks may be required. In this case you might first point out that a pint contains about 16 ounces. The respondent may decide that he/she really meant a standard 12 ounce glass a beer, which means that you can record that they consumed 5 beers per week. However, if they confirm that they consumed 5 pints estimated to be 16 ounces each, then their estimated weekly consumption is 6.7 beers ($5 \times 16 = 80$ total ounces, divided by 12 ounces for a “standard beer” gives 6.7 Standard beers). Since the computer only accepts whole numbers, you should always round your estimate up if the fraction is .5 or higher. In this example you would round up your estimate of 6.7 beers to 7.

You may occasionally encounter similar issues when estimating weekly consumption of other alcohol beverages such as wine and drinks containing spirits or ‘hard’ liquor. For example, if the respondent indicates they drink wine from an oversized wine glass then you may have to work with the respondent to estimate the size of the glass and to perform calculations similar to the beer example above. Respondents may also indicate that they do not know how much hard liquor was in some of their mixed drinks such as margaritas. In this case, we must assume that each drink contains a shot (1.5 oz) of liquor.

Question by Question Instructions

- Q1 This question assesses if the respondent presently drinks alcoholic beverages. If the respondent answers no, then the computer will automatically skip over the questions asking about current consumption. Some respondents, particularly those who drink only occasionally, may ask what you mean by “presently”. If they indicate that they drink only occasionally or are having trouble with the definition of “presently” then select the yes box. Qs 2-6 assess consumption in the past week and you will have the opportunity to record that they did not consume any alcoholic beverages during this time period. Previous epidemiologic studies have shown that low levels of alcohol consumption may lower the risk of heart disease, so you do not want to miss the opportunity to record the consumption of even a single alcoholic beverage.
- Q2 The question assesses how many glasses of red wine the participant usually has per week. You should emphasize the word ‘red’ when you deliver this question since Q3 will ask about white wine. It is important to accurately and separately record red and white wine consumption, given

that some (but not all) epidemiologic studies suggest that red wine consumption may be particularly healthful in small quantities.

If the respondent reports that they consume less than one glass of red wine per week then enter “00” as the quantity.

- Q3 The question asks how many glasses of white wine the participant usually has per week. You should emphasize the word ‘white’ when you deliver this question. On occasion the respondent may request to modify downward their estimate for Q2 if they mentally added together red and white wine consumption together.

If the respondent reports that they consume less than one glass of white wine per week then enter “00” as the quantity.

- Q4 The question assesses how many cans, bottles, or glasses of beer the participant usually has per week. Beer includes more traditional beverages such as pulque and chicha. If the respondent reports that they consume less than one beer per week then enter “00” as the quantity.
- Q5 The question asks how many drinks of liquor, spirits, or mixed drinks the participant usually has per week. Spirits includes liquor such as whiskey, vodka, tequila, rum, and mixed drinks such as martinis, as well as more traditional beverages such as aguardiente and cañita. If the respondent reports that they consume less than one drink per week, enter “00” as the quantity
- Q6 The question asks how often has the participant have 4 or more drinks [for females] and 5 or more drinks [for males] containing any kind of alcohol within a two-hour period. Read “4 or more drinks” for females and “5 or more drinks” for males. This question is designed to estimate the prevalence of risky or potentially unhealthy drinking patterns. This threshold is 4 drinks for women and 5 drinks per men in a two-hour period. It is important to read each possible response because the respondent may now be used to answering questions based on a one week reference period (Q2 – Q6). This question has a longer recall period in order to capture occasional risky drinking which may have important health consequences.
- Q7 The question asks if the participant ever drinks alcohol. This question is asked of respondents who stated in Q1 that they did not presently drink alcohol. If they respond no this respondent has completed the alcohol questionnaire.
- Q8 The question asks about how long ago the participant stopped drinking alcohol. This question is asked of former drinkers. You should read each response item until the respondent selects one. Be sure to mark only one response option.
- Q9 The question asks if the participant stopped drinking for health reasons. If the respondent has difficulty answering yes or no, ask them to select the response that best captures their beliefs since “not sure” is unavailable as a response option.
- Q10 The question asks if the participant stopped drinking alcohol on the advice of a doctor (or health worker). It is not necessary to read “or health worker” unless the respondent seeks clarification of the meaning of doctor. In this case the question can be restated to include “or health worker”.