

Alcohol, Smoking and Substance Involvement Screening Test (ASSIST)¹

The ASSIST consists of eight questions related to substance use, frequency of use, and negative consequences related to substance use. The first two questions ask which substances individuals have used in their lifetime and in the past three months. The next five questions pre-populate to ask only about substances individuals indicated using in the relevant time frame (past three months or lifetime).

Sample Screening Questions:

- During the past three months, how often have you had a strong desire or urge to use the substances you checked?
- During the past three months, how often have you failed to do what was normally expected of you because of your use of the [substances listed below]?

Individuals respond to the first two questions by indicating Yes or No. The remaining questions are generally answered:

- Never
- Once or Twice
- Monthly
- Weekly
- Daily or Almost Daily

The final question asks whether individuals have ever used a drug by injection (answered Yes or No).

Scoring follows this pattern: Indication of drug use, frequent drug use, and frequent negative consequences will result in a higher score. Questions related to negative consequences of drug use are more heavily weighted. Drug use in the past three months is more highly weighted than lifetime drug use.

Interpretation:

Interpretation of this screening differs based on substance.

For alcohol use:

0–10: Low risk for substance use problems
11–26: Moderate risk for substance abuse
27+: High risk for substance use problems

For tobacco and other substances:

0–3: Low risk for substance use problems
4–26: Moderate risk for substance problems
27+: High risk for substance use problems

¹ Humenuk, RE, Ali RA, Babor TF, Farrell M, Formigoni ML, Jittiwutikarn J, Boerngen de Larcercda R, Ling W, Marsden J, Monteiro M, Niiwhatiwa S, Pal H, Poznyak V & Simon S (2008). Validation of the Alcohol Smoking and Substance Involvement Screening Test (ASSIST). *Addiction* 103(6): 1039–1047.