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► [Curbing problem drinking with personalized-feedback interventions: a meta-analysis.](#)

Riper H., van Straten A., Keuken M. et al. [Request reprint](#)

American Journal of Preventive Medicine: 2009, 36(3), p 247–255.

Synthesis of randomised trials finds worthwhile reductions in drinking after college students and others are simply very briefly informed how their drinking compares to population norms.

Abstract The effectiveness of personalised feedback interventions to reduce problem drinking has been evaluated in several randomised trials and systematic reviews. A meta-analysis was performed to examine the overall effectiveness of brief, single-session personalised feedback comparing the individual's drinking or drink-related risks to population norms, delivered without any further therapeutic guidance. Selection and analyses of studies were conducted in 2008. Fourteen randomised trials of single-session personalised feedback interventions without therapeutic guidance were identified. Their combined effectiveness on the reduction of problematic alcohol consumption was evaluated in a meta-analysis. Alcohol consumption was the primary outcome measure.

The **results** indicated that such interventions led on average to a statistically significant small to medium size reduction in alcohol consumption such that about eight people had to receive the intervention to generate one good clinical outcome. The authors concluded that single-session personalised feedback interventions without therapeutic guidance appear to be a viable and probably cost-effective option for reducing problem drinking in student and general populations. The Internet offers ample opportunities to deliver personalised feedback interventions on a broad scale, and problem drinkers are known to be amenable to Internet-based interventions. More research is needed on the long-term effectiveness of personalised feedback interventions for problem drinking, on their potential as a first step in a stepped-care approach, and on their effectiveness with other groups (such as youth obliged to use judicial service programmes because of violations of minimum-age drinking laws) and in other settings (such as primary care).

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