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# Glossary of Terms

- Alcohol abuse:** Drinking pattern in which, either on a regular basis or irregular basis, alcohol consumption is above average and is associated with problems such as arrest for drinking while intoxicated or decline in job performance.
- Alcoholism:** A general term used to refer to abuse of ethanol substances. From a medical perspective, alcoholism typically refers to dependence thought to have a physiological basis. The term is also used to denote use of alcohol as it relates to significant social or other problems (including problems of criminal behavior and inability to function productively).
- Antabuse<sup>3</sup>:** Brand name for the drug, disulfiram, which is used as an adjunct in both inpatient and outpatient treatment programs and in conjunction with a number of therapies. Under the influence of this drug, patients who ingest alcohol become ill.
- Aversion therapy:** Treatment of alcoholism and alcohol abuse in which the ingestion of alcohol following classical conditioning is paired with an aversive stimulus or event (e.g., vomiting, electrical shock, or thoughts of bad consequences) so that the ingestion of alcohol itself eventually evokes aversive thoughts and/or responses. Techniques include the use of chemicals (such as emetine) and electroshock.
- Cost-benefit analysis (CBA):** An analytical technique that compares the costs of a project or technological application to the resultant benefits, with both costs and benefits expressed by the same measure. This measure is nearly always monetary.
- Cost-effectiveness analysis (CEA):** An analytical technique that compares the costs of a project or of alternative projects to the resultant benefits, with costs and benefits/effectiveness expressed by different measures. Costs are usually expressed in dollars, but benefits/effectiveness are ordinarily expressed in terms such as "lives saved," "disability avoided," "quality-adjusted life years saved," or any other relevant objectives. Also, when benefits/effectiveness are difficult to express in a common metric, they may be presented as an "array."
- CEA/CBA:** A composite term referring to a family of analytical techniques that are employed to compare costs and benefits of programs or technologies. The term as used in this assessment means "cost-effectiveness analysis/cost-benefit analysis."
- Delirium tremens (DTs):** A syndrome associated with alcohol withdrawal that includes a clouding of consciousness, difficulty in sustaining attention, disorientation, and autonomic hyperactivity.
- Drug:** Any chemical or biological substance that may be applied to, ingested by, or injected into humans in order to prevent, treat, or diagnose disease or other medical conditions.
- Effectiveness:** Same as efficacy (see below) except that it refers to average or actual conditions of use.
- Efficacy:** The probability of benefit to individuals in a defined population from a medical technology applied for a given medical problem under ideal conditions of use.
- Incidence:** In epidemiology, the number of cases of disease, infection, or some other event having its onset during a prescribed period of time, in relation to the unit of population in which it occurs. Incidence is a measure of morbidity or other events as they happen over a period of time.
- Inpatient care:** Care that includes an overnight stay in a medical facility. For alcoholism inpatient care, settings include alcoholism detoxification units and rehabilitation units within general hospitals, alcoholism treatment units within State and private psychiatric hospitals, and specialized alcoholism hospitals.
- Intermediate care:** Residential programs that provide primarily rehabilitation services to clients. For alcoholism intermediate care, settings include halfway houses, quarterway houses, and recovery homes that are typically community-based, peer-group oriented residences providing food, shelter, and supportive services in a nondrinking atmosphere.
- Outpatient care:** Care that does not include an overnight stay in the facility in which care is provided. For alcoholism outpatient care, settings include (but are not limited to) private physicians' offices, community mental health centers, free-standing outpatient clinics, alcoholism treatment centers, and vocational rehabilitation clinics.
- Prevalence:** In epidemiology, the number of cases or disease, infected persons, or persons with disabilities or some other condition present at a particular time, in relation to the size of the population. Prevalence is a measure of morbidity at a point in time.
- Randomized clinical trial (RCT):** An experimental design by which human subjects are randomly assigned either to an experimental group (in which subjects receive the treatment being studied) or to a control group (in which subjects do not receive the treatment being studied). Also referred to as "randomized controlled clinical trial" or "controlled clinical trial."
- Reliability:** A measure of the consistency of a method in producing results. A reliable test gives the same results when applied more than once under the same conditions. Also called "precision."
- Risk:** A measure of the probability of an adverse or

untoward outcome and the severity of the resultant harm to health of individuals in a defined population and associated with use of a medical technology applied for a given medical problem under specified conditions of use.

**Safety:** A judgment of the acceptability of risk (see above) in a specified situation.

**Tolerance:** The need for markedly increased amounts of alcohol to achieve the desired effect, or the diminished effect from regular use of the same amount.

**Validity:** A measure of the extent to which an observed

situation reflects the “true” situation. **Internal validity** is a measure of the extent to which study results reflect the true relationship of a “risk factor” (e.g., treatment or technology) to the outcome of interest in study subjects. **External validity** is a measure of the extent to which study results can be generalized to the population that is represented by individuals in the study, assuming that the characteristics of that population are accurately specified.

**Withdrawal:** A reaction to noningestion of alcohol; characterized by symptoms such as morning “shakes” and malaise relieved by drinking.

## Glossary of Acronyms

AA	—	Alcoholics Anonymous	GHAA	—	Group Health Association of America
ADAMHA	—	Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration (PHS)	HCFA	—	Health Care Financing Administration (DHHS)
ATC	—	Alcoholism Treatment Center (NIAAA)	HMO	—	health maintenance organization
BAL	—	blood alcohol level	IBTA	—	Individualized Behavior Therapy for Alcoholics
CBA	—	cost-benefit analysis	NDATUS	—	National Drug and Alcoholism Treatment Utilization Survey
CEA	—	cost-effectiveness analysis	NIAAA	—	National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (ADAMHA)
CHAMPUS	=	Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services (Department of Defense)	OTA	—	Office of Technology Assessment (U.S. Congress)
DHHS	—	Department of Health and Human Services	RCT	—	randomized clinical trial
DTs	—	delirium tremens	PHS	—	Public Health Service (DHHS)
DWI	—	driving while intoxicated	VA	—	Veterans Administration
FDA	—	Food and Drug Administration (PHS)			
GAO	—	General Accounting Office (U.S. Congress)			