Urge to Drink Scale

INSTRUCTIONS: The following questions are designed to help you assess an important aspect of your recovery status: the urge to drink. Complete this form by thinking about the past week and placing a check mark next to the response that is most true for you.

1. How often have you thought about drinking or about how good a drink would make you feel during this period?
   - (0) Never, that is, 0 times during this period.
   - (1) Rarely, that is, 1 to 2 times during this period.
   - (2) Occasionally, that is, 3 to 4 times during this period.
   - (3) Sometimes, that is, 5 to 10 times during this period or 1 to 2 times a day.
   - (4) Often, that is, 11 to 20 times during this period or 2 to 3 times a day.
   - (5) Most of the time, that is, 20 to 40 times during this period or 3 to 6 times a day.
   - (6) Nearly all of the time, that is, more than 40 times during this period or more than 6 times a day.

2. At its most severe point, how strong was your urge to drink during this period?
   - (0) None at all.
   - (1) Slight, that is a very mild urge.
   - (2) Mild urge.
   - (3) Moderate urge.
   - (4) Strong urge, but easily controlled.
   - (5) Strong urge and difficult to control.
   - (6) Strong urge and would have drank alcohol if it were available.

3. How much time have you spent thinking about drinking or about how good a drink would make you feel during this period?
   - (0) None at all.
   - (1) Less than 20 minutes.
   - (2) 21-45 minutes.
   - (3) 46-90 minutes.
   - (4) 90 minutes - 3 hours.
   - (5) Between 3 to 6 hours.
   - (6) More than 6 hours.

4. How difficult would it have been to resist taking a drink during this period of time if you had known a bottle was in your house?
   - (0) Not difficult at all.
   - (1) Very mildly difficult.
   - (2) Mildly difficult.
   - (3) Moderately difficult.
   - (4) Very difficult.
   - (5) Extremely difficult.
   - (6) Would not be able to resist.

5. Keeping in mind your responses to the previous questions, please rate your overall average alcohol urge to drink for the stated period of time.
   - (0) Never thought about drinking and never had the urge to drink.
   - (1) Rarely thought about drinking and rarely had the urge to drink.
   - (2) Occasionally thought about drinking and occasionally had the urge to drink.
   - (3) Sometimes thought about drinking and sometimes had the urge to drink.
   - (4) Often thought about drinking and often had the urge to drink.
   - (5) Thought about drinking most of the time and had the urge to drink most of the time.
   - (6) Thought about drinking nearly all of the time and had the urge to drink nearly all of the time.

* The Urge to Drink Scale is a modified version of the PACS. The rationale and psychometric properties of the PACS can be found in: Flannery BA, Volpicelli JR, Pettinati HM. Psychometric Properties of the Penn Alcohol Craving Scale.

Background Information:
Urge to Drink Scale (For Provider Use)

Clinical Significance
The Urge to Drink Scale is a modified version of an assessment that was developed and validated by researchers at the University of Pennsylvania’s Center for Studies of Addiction. This measure has been shown to be a valid and reliable instrument for assessing an individual’s urge to drink alcohol. A biological urge to drink is fundamental in alcohol dependence, and the urge to drink while in treatment has consistently been shown to be a predictor of future relapse in alcohol dependent individuals. For this reason, the Urge to Drink Scale might be used to assess a person's urge to drink at the:

a) Beginning of Treatment – To assess how much a person is experiencing urges to drink when he or she first enters treatment.

b) During Treatment – To monitor the degree to which a person’s urge to drink is persisting, or has been relieved during treatment.

c) At Follow-up Points – To periodically monitor whether a person’s urge to drink continues to be in remission or has returned.

Instructions for Completion
The Urge to Drink Scale is a self-administered questionnaire that patients (clients) can complete on their own. Simply invite the individual to answer all of the questions as accurately as possible by placing check marks in the spaces provided.

Scoring
For each of the five questions in the Urge to Drink Scale there are seven possible responses that a patient might select. At the end of each response there is a small number in parentheses, for example: (0). This number is an “item score.” To determine a patient’s Total Urge to Drink Score, add the five item scores together.

Interpretation
There is no established “cut off” score for the Urge to Drink Scale, however, researchers at the University of Pennsylvania reported that total scores of 10 or higher during treatment were associated with increased risk for relapse.

This tool is provided as a service by Alkermes, Inc. and Cephalon, Inc. It is intended to help you in your clinical assessment of patients with alcohol dependence. It is not intended to replace your own diagnostic procedure and clinical judgment.

References: