



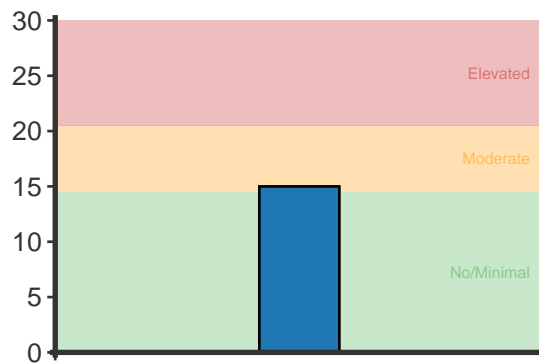
### Penn Alcohol Craving Scale (PACS)

<i>Client Name</i>	Generic Client	<i>Date administered</i>	18 Mar 2026
<i>Date of birth (age)</i>	14 Dec 2015 (10)	<i>Time taken</i>	12s
<i>Assessor</i>	Dr David Hegarty		

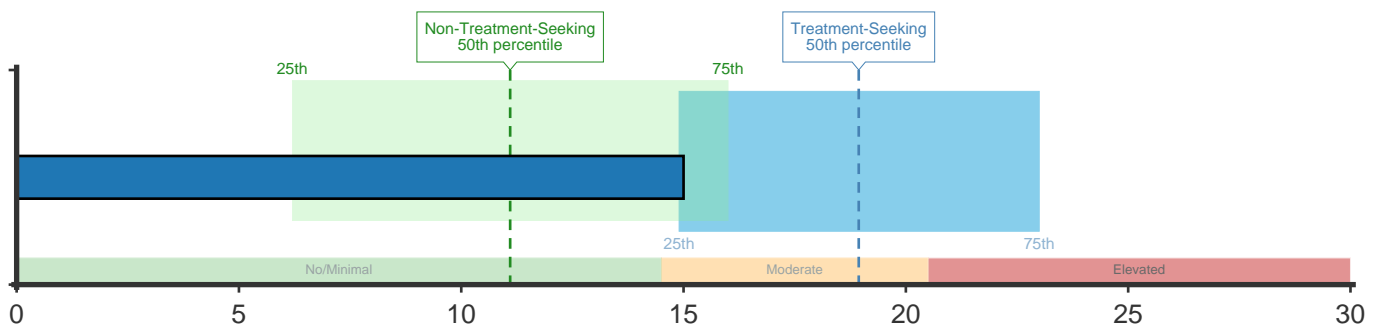
### PACS Total Score

	Score	Craving Category	Treatment-Seeking Heavy Drinker Percentile
Alcohol Craving Total	15	Moderate	26

### PACS Total Score



### PACS Total Score in Comparison to Heavy Drinkers in Non-Treatment-Seeking and Treatment-Seeking Samples



### Interpretation

The Penn Alcohol Craving Scale (PACS) was administered on 18 March 2026. The respondent obtained a total score of 15 out of 30, which falls within the Moderate range, indicating a meaningful level of alcohol craving during the past week. Craving at this level may represent an active clinical target, particularly if the individual is attempting to reduce or abstain from drinking. Compared to a sample of treatment-seeking heavy drinkers, this score falls at the 26th



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percentile.

The highest-scoring items were:

- 1. *During the past week how often have you thought about drinking or about how good a drink would make you feel? (Sometimes (5 to 10 times during the past week or 1 to 2 times per day))*
- 2. *At its most severe point, how strong was your craving during the past week? (Moderate urge)*
- 3. *During the past week how much time have you spent thinking about drinking or about how good a drink would make you feel? (46 to 90 minutes)*

## Scoring and Interpretation Information

For comprehensive information on the PACS, [see here](#).

### ### PACS Scoring

Each item is rated on a 7-point scale, where 0 represents the complete absence of craving (e.g., 'never thought about drinking', 'no urge') and 6 represents the most severe level (e.g., 'thought about drinking nearly all of the time', 'would not be able to resist'). Response anchors vary across items but follow the same severity progression. The PACS total score is the sum of all five items, yielding a possible range of 0 to 30. Higher scores indicate greater alcohol craving.

### ### PACS Craving Severity Categories

Descriptive severity labels are based on the response anchors' meanings at each score level (i.e., what a typical respondent at that score would endorse across items). Based upon the PACS total score, descriptive severity labels are (with Murphy et al.'s (2014) original descriptors in brackets):

- 0–14: No/Minimal (Absent). Craving is absent or minimal. The average response falls in the "nonexistent", "slight", or "mild" range across items.
- 15–20: Moderate (Subclinical). Craving is present at a moderate level. The average response corresponds to "moderate urge" or "moderately difficult" to resist.
- 21–30: Elevated (Present). Craving is clearly present and potentially clinically significant. The average response corresponds to "strong urge" or "very difficult" to resist.

These categories are content-based interpretive guideposts derived from the response scale semantics, not empirically validated diagnostic thresholds. They should be interpreted as describing the general level of craving severity rather than as clinical classifications. In clinical practice, a score of 15 or above may warrant further attention to craving management, while scores of 21 or above suggest craving at a level where the respondent reports strong urges and significant difficulty resisting.

### ### PACS Percentile Context

To provide additional interpretive context, percentile rankings are derived from a treatment-seeking heavy-drinking reference sample (Murphy et al., 2014). These percentiles indicate a respondent's position relative to other treatment-seeking heavy drinkers. For example, a total score of 15 corresponds to approximately the 26th percentile in the treatment-seeking sample, indicating that roughly one-quarter of treatment-seeking heavy drinkers scored at or below this level. A score of 21 corresponds to approximately the 63rd percentile.

### ### PACS Change Score Interpretation

The PACS is primarily intended for progress monitoring, and score changes across



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administrations provide clinically informative data about treatment response. A minimally important difference (MID) of 3 points is used to evaluate whether a change in total score is clinically meaningful. This threshold is derived by applying the widely used convention that a meaningful change equals approximately half a standard deviation (Norman et al., 2003; Turner et al., 2010), applied to the treatment-seeking sample SD of 5.99 (Murphy et al., 2014).

### ### PACS Graphs

On first administration, a bar chart displaying the PACS total score with craving severity shading in the background is presented. Clinical percentiles (a treatment-seeking heavy drinking sample) are shown on the right-hand side of the graph. A horizontal bar chart displays the PACS total score in comparison to a non-treatment-seeking (heavy drinking) sample and a treatment-seeking (heavy drinking) sample. Multiple administrations of the PACS will produce a line chart plotting the raw total score over time, with background shading indicating the craving severity categories.

## Client Responses

1 During the past week how often have you thought about drinking or about how good a drink would make you feel?

- 0 Never (0 times during the past week)
- 1 Rarely (1 to 2 times during the past week)
- 2 Occasionally (3 to 4 times during the past week)
- 3 Sometimes (5 to 10 times during the past week or 1 to 2 times per day)**
- 4 Often (11 to 20 times during the past week or 2 to 3 times per day)
- 5 Most of the time (20 to 40 times during the past week or 3 to 6 times per day)
- 6 Nearly all of the time (more than 40 times during the past week or more than 6 times per day)

2 At its most severe point, how strong was your craving during the past week?

- 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 drunk alcohol if it were available

3 During the past week how much time have you spent thinking about drinking or about how good a drink would make you feel?

- 0 None at all
- 1 Less than 20 minutes
- 2 21 to 45 minutes
- 3 46 to 90 minutes**
- 4 90 minutes to 3 hours
- 5 Between 3 to 6 hours
- 6 More than 6 hours



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### Client Responses (cont.)

4 During the past week how difficult would it have been to resist taking a drink if you had known a bottle were 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 craving for the past week.

- 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