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Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, the government has issued new rules on the sale and consumption of alcohol across the country. A notification was published in the Bangladesh Gazette on February 5.

Anyone over the age of 21 will be allowed to apply for a drinking permit that will enable them to purchase a restricted amount of alcohol. Hotels, restaurants, and outlets that serve food as well as displaying and selling alcohol will be allowed to apply for liquor sale licences. Clubs and organizations that have a certain number of members with drinking permits can apply for the licences too.

The rules also fix opening and closure time of bars and liquor shops. Bars and local liquor shops will have to keep closed on Fridays, religious and government declared holidays.

Brewing alcohol at home is banned under the new rules.

US

In South Carolina, a Statehouse subcommittee unanimously advanced a bill on March 2 which will close a loophole in state law that allows alcoholic-infused desserts like ice cream and popsicles to be sold in supermarkets, stores and by food trucks.

Most alcohol products are strictly regulated by state law, but manufacturers of alcohol-infused products like ice cream fall under an obscure rule in state statute known as the "bakery exemption". Industry groups including the Wine and Spirits Wholesalers Association and the Beer Wholesalers Association have expressed support for the bill.

Spain

In Spain, amendments to legislation that were approved in December will come into force on 21 March. The updated Traffic Law aims to make the roads safer, makes some penalties more severe and places the focus on young road users, who are permitted to use motorcycles, light quads and scooters from the age of 15.

Once the new law comes into force, it will be illegal road users under 18 to have any alcohol in their bloodstream or in exhaled air, nor can they drive if there is any presence of drugs in their body, with the exception of prescribed medication.

For adult drivers the limits will remain the same as they are now: 0.3 grams of alcohol per litre of blood and 0.15 milligrams per litre of exhaled air for newly qualified drivers or professional drivers and 0.5 grams of alcohol per litre of blood and 0.25 milligrams per litre of exhaled air for other drivers.

Tasmania

The Healthy Tasmania Five-Year Strategic Plan 2022-2026 was launched by Jeremy Rockliff, Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing. Rockliff said, "As a Government, we realise all Tasmanians should have the opportunity to live their best lives for as long as possible in communities that support connections to people, place and culture... As part of this strategy, our focus is on actions that support Tasmanians to be more connected in their communities, have positive mental health and wellbeing, limit harmful alcohol use, be smoke free, eat well and live more active lives.



Smoking, alcohol consumption, and the risk of thyroid cancer

It is unclear if cigarette smoking and alcohol consumption are associated with thyroid cancer risk. A study with a Korean population explored associations between cigarette smoking and alcohol consumption with thyroid cancer.

Using data from the Korean National Health Insurance database, the study included individuals aged ≥ 20 years who participated in the 2009 health screening program and were followed until 2017. The risk of thyroid cancer was estimated, adjusted for age, sex, regular exercise, monthly income, body mass index, diabetes mellitus, and dyslipidemia.

During a mean follow-up period of 8.33 years, of 9,699,104 participants, 89,527 (0.9%) were diagnosed with thyroid cancer. Compared with those who never smoked, current smokers had a lower risk of thyroid cancer [aHR: 0.74, 95% confidence interval (CI): 0.72-0.76], while ex-smokers did not (aHR: 0.98, 95% CI: 0.96-1.01). There was no significant dose-response relationship

with regards to daily amount smoked, duration of smoking, or pack-years.

A reduced risk of thyroid cancer was observed in subjects who reporting the following categories of alcohol intake (compared to none): mild (aHR: 0.92, 95% CI: 0.90-0.93), moderate (aHR: 0.86, 95% CI: 0.84-0.89) and heavy (aHR: 0.86, 95% CI: 0.82-0.89). Inverse associations with thyroid cancer risk were observed regarding the number of drinking episodes per week and the number of drinks per occasion. A sub-multiplicative effect of smoking and alcohol consumption was observed.

The researchers observe that thyroid cancer risk was inversely associated (reduced) with smoking and alcohol consumption, with a significant interaction between these variables.

Source: Yeo Y, Shin DW, Han K, Kim D, Kim TH, Chun S, Jeong SM, Song YM. Smoking, alcohol consumption, and the risk of thyroid cancer: a population-based Korean cohort study of 10 million people. *Thyroid*. 2022 Mar 2. doi.org/10.1089/thy.2021.0675.

Associations between alcohol consumption patterns and risk of multiple myeloma

Among the potential modifiable risk factors, the association between alcohol consumption and the risk of multiple myeloma remains controversial. Researchers investigated the effects of weekly average alcohol consumption and drinking pattern on the risk of multiple myeloma using a nationwide representative database.

11,737,467 subjects who participated in the Korean National Health Screening Program in 2009 and 2010 were included and the risk of multiple myeloma according to weekly alcohol consumption, drinking frequency, and amount per session were calculated.

During a mean follow-up period of 6.8 years after a one-year time lag, 6,981 subjects (3,921 men and 3,060 women) were diagnosed with multiple myeloma. Compared with nondrinkers, all drinkers were at a significantly lower risk for multiple myeloma. The risk of multiple myeloma was reduced in a dose-dependent manner: mild drinkers [adjusted HR (aHR), 0.89; 95% confidence interval (CI), 0.84–0.95], moderate drinkers (aHR, 0.83; 95% CI, 0.76–0.91), and heavy drinkers

(aHR, 0.76; 95% CI, 0.69–0.85). Furthermore, both drinking frequency and amount per drinking session showed inverse association with the risk of multiple myeloma.

This large population-based study suggested an inverse dose-dependent association between total average alcohol consumption and the risk of multiple myeloma, and drinking frequency and amount per drinking session seemed to not differ in their relative contribution to the risk of multiple myeloma.

On the basis of the unprecedentedly large number of study population analyzed in this study, the study provides solid epidemiologic evidence of a significant protective effect of alcohol consumption on multiple myeloma risk.

Source: Keun Hye Jeon, Su-Min Jeong, Dong Wook Shin, Kyungdo Han, Dahye Kim, Jung Eun Yoo, Taewoong Choi; Associations between Alcohol Consumption Patterns and Risk of Multiple Myeloma: A Nationwide Cohort Study in South Korea. *Cancer Epidemiol Biomarkers Prev* 1 March 2022; 31 (3): 670–678. doi.org/10.1158/1055-9965.EPI-21-0904



Association of alcohol types, coffee and tea intake with mortality

A study examined how alcohol intake from wine and non-wine alcoholic beverages (non-wine) in g/d, as well as cups of coffee and tea are associated with all-cause, cancer, non-cancer and CVD mortality.

Consumption was assessed in 354 386 participants of the UK Biobank cohort who drank alcohol at least occasionally and survived at least 2 years after baseline with 20 201 deaths occurring over 4.2 million person-years. Hazard ratios (HR) for mortality were assessed.

A significant U-shaped association was detected between wine consumption and all-cause, non-cancer and CVD mortality. Wine consumption with lowest risk of death (nadir) ranged from 19 to 23 g alcohol/day in all participants and both sexes separately. In contrast, non-wine intake was significantly and positively associated in a dose-dependent manner with all mortality types studied except for CVD in females and with the nadir between 0 and 12 g alcohol/d.

In all participants, the nadir for all-cause mortality was 2 cups coffee/d with non-coffee drinkers showing a slightly increased risk of death. Tea consumption was significantly and negatively associated with all mortality types in both sexes.

Taken together, light to moderate consumption of wine but not other alcoholic beverages is associated with decreased all-cause and non-cancer mortality. A minor negative association of high coffee consumption with mortality cannot be excluded whereas tea intake is associated with a consistently decreased risk of all mortality types studied, the study authors say.

Source: Schaefer SM, Kaiser A, Behrendt I, Eichner G, Fasshauer M. Association of alcohol types, coffee and tea intake with mortality: prospective cohort study of UK Biobank participants. *Br J Nutr.* 2022 Feb 3:1-11. doi.org/10.1017/S000711452200040X.

The intake of flavonoids, stilbenes, and tyrosols is associated with lower carotid and femoral subclinical atherosclerosis and coronary calcium

It is suggested that polyphenols back the cardiovascular protection offered by the Mediterranean diet. Research published in the *European Journal of Nutrition* evaluated the association of specific types of dietary polyphenols with prevalent subclinical atherosclerosis in middle-aged subjects.

Ultrasonography and TC were performed on 2318 men from the Aragon Workers Health Study, recruited between 2011 and 2014, to assess the presence of plaques in carotid and femoral arteries and coronary calcium. Polyphenol intake was assessed using a validated semi-quantitative 136-item food frequency questionnaire. The Phenol Explorer database was used to derive polyphenol class intake. The cross-sectional association of polyphenols intake with femoral and carotid subclinical atherosclerosis and coronary calcium was estimated.

A higher intake of flavonoids (third vs. first tertile) was associated with a lower risk of both carotid

(OR 0.80: CI 95%) and femoral (0.62) subclinical atherosclerosis. A higher intake of stilbenes was associated with a lower risk of femoral subclinical atherosclerosis (0.62) and positive coronary calcium (0.75). A higher intake of tyrosols was also associated with a lower risk of positive coronary calcium (0.80). The associations remained similar when adjusted for blood lipids and blood pressure.

The authors conclude that dietary flavonoids, stilbenes, and tyrosols, whose main sources are red wine and virgin olive oil, are associated with lower prevalence of subclinical atherosclerosis in middle-aged subjects.

Source: Salazar HM, de Deus Mendonça R, Laclaustra M, Moreno-Franco B, Åkesson A, Guallar-Castillón P, Donat-Vargas C. The intake of flavonoids, stilbenes, and tyrosols, mainly consumed through red wine and virgin olive oil, is associated with lower carotid and femoral subclinical atherosclerosis and coronary calcium. *Eur J Nutr.* 2022 Mar 7. doi.org/10.1007/s00394-022-02823-0.



Alcohol consumption and the risk of incident atrial fibrillation

Alcohol consumption is a known, modifiable risk factor for incident atrial fibrillation. However, it remains unclear whether the protective effect of moderate alcohol consumption that has been reported for various cardiovascular diseases also applies to the risk for new-onset atrial fibrillation. A meta-analysis evaluated the role of different drinking patterns (low: <14 grams/week; moderate: <168 grams/week; and heavy: >168 grams/week) on the risk for incident atrial fibrillation.

Major electronic databases were searched for observational cohorts examining the role of different drinking behaviors on the risk for incident AF. Researchers analysed 16 studies (13,044,007 patients). Incident atrial fibrillation rate was 2.3%. Moderate alcohol consumption significantly reduced the risk for new-onset atrial fibrillation

when compared to both abstainers and heavy drinkers. Heavy-drinking pattern compared to low also increased the risk for incident atrial fibrillation.

The findings suggest a J-shaped relationship between alcohol consumption and incident atrial fibrillation. Up to 14 drinks per week seem to decrease the risk for developing atrial fibrillation. The authors comment that because of substantial heterogeneity observed, no robust conclusion can be drawn, but these results suggest that the association between alcohol consumption and incident atrial fibrillation is far from being a straightforward dose-response effect.

Source: Giannopoulos G, Anagnostopoulos I, Kousta M, Vergopoulos S, Deftereos S, Vassilikos V. Alcohol Consumption and the Risk of Incident Atrial Fibrillation: A Meta-Analysis. *Diagnostics* (Basel). 2022 Feb 13;12(2):479. doi.org/0.3390/diagnostics12020479.

Intake of flavonoids and flavonoid-rich foods and mortality risk among individuals with Parkinson's disease

Although flavonoids have the potential to exert neuroprotective benefits, evidence of their role in improving survival rates among individuals with Parkinson disease (PD) is lacking. Researchers prospectively studied the association between pre-diagnosis and postdiagnosis flavonoid intakes and risk of mortality among individuals with PD identified from 2 large ongoing cohorts of US men and women.

Included in the current analysis were 599 women from the Nurses' Health Study and 652 men from the Health Professionals Follow-Up Study who were newly diagnosed with PD during follow-up. Dietary intakes of total flavonoid and its subclasses, together with major flavonoid-rich foods (tea, apples, berries, orange and orange juice, and red wine), were repeatedly assessed with a validated food frequency questionnaire every 4 years. Mortality was ascertained via the National Death Index and state vital statistics records.

944 deaths were documented during 32 to 34 years of follow-up. A higher total flavonoid intake before PD diagnosis was associated with a lower future risk for all-cause mortality in men (hazard ratio [HR] comparing 2 extreme quartiles 0.53, 95% confidence interval [CI] 0.39, 0.71) but not in women (HR 0.93, 95% CI 0.68, 1.28) after adjustment

for age, smoking status, total energy intake, and other covariates. The pooled HR comparing the extreme quartiles was 0.70 (95% CI 0.40, 1.22) with significant heterogeneity. For flavonoid subclasses, the highest quartile of anthocyanins, flavones, and flavan-3-ols intakes before diagnosis had a lower mortality risk compared to the lowest quartile (pooled HR 0.66, 0.78, and 0.69,); for berries and red wine, participants consuming ≥ 3 servings per week had a lower risk (pooled HR 0.77, 95% CI 0.58, 1.02; and pooled HR 0.68, 95% CI 0.51, 0.91, respectively) compared to <1 serving per month. After PD diagnosis, greater consumptions of total flavonoid, subclasses including flavonols, anthocyanins, flavan-3-ols, and polymers, and berries and red wine were associated with lower mortality risk.

The authors state that among individuals with PD, higher consumption of flavonoids, especially anthocyanins and flavan-3-ols, and flavonoid-rich food such as berries and red wine was likely to be associated with a lower risk of mortality.

Source: Zhang X, Molsberry SA, Yeh TS, Cassidy A, Schwarzschild MA, Ascherio A, Gao X. Intake of Flavonoids and Flavonoid-Rich Foods and Mortality Risk Among Individuals With Parkinson Disease: A Prospective Cohort Study. *Neurology*. 2022 Mar 8;98(10):e1064-e1076. doi.org/10.1212/WNL.0000000000013275.



Alcohol consumption and risk of Alzheimer's disease

Researchers from Jilin City, China investigated the association between alcohol consumption and the risk of Alzheimer's disease (AD).

PubMed and Web of Science databases were systematically searched as of 1 September 2019 and the association between alcohol consumption and AD risk was evaluated. Subgroup analyses based on the type of alcohol, ethnicity, study design and sex were performed. An alcohol dose-response meta-analysis was carried out. A total of 13 studies were included in the quantitative synthesis, and six were used in the dose-response meta-analysis.

Compared with non-drinkers, individuals who drank had a lower risk of AD (relative risk 0.68, 95% CI 0.53-0.87). In subgroup analyses, drinking wine was found to reduce the occurrence of AD (relative risk 0.71, 95% CI 0.51-0.96). When stratified by ethnicity, sex and study design, no association was

seen between AD risk and alcohol use. There was an overall non-linear, but not significant, association between alcohol intake dose and AD risk. A significant non-linear association was observed between excess AD risk and alcohol intake dose in men starting from 14.8 drinks per week. Women's alcohol intake dose <16.9 drinks per week showed a significant non-linear association with decreased AD risk.

The study concludes that drinking alcohol could reduce the risk of AD. Alcohol dose had a non-linear, but non-significant, relationship with the development of AD. The amount of alcohol consumption showed significant sex-specific effects on AD.

Source: Xie C, Feng Y. Alcohol consumption and risk of Alzheimer's disease: A dose-response meta-analysis. *Geriatr Gerontol Int.* 2022 Feb 16. doi.org/10.1111/ggi.14357.

Alcohol intake, beverage type, and lung function

Researchers in China investigated whether alcohol intake contributes to lung function levels and which beverage type may have an effect. The results are published in the *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*.

In the multicohort study of Chinese adults 3742 participants from the Wuhai-Zhuhai Cohort and 12,526 participants from the Dongfeng-Tongji Cohort were followed up for 3 and 5 years, respectively. Information on the type and daily amount of alcohol intake was collected through face-to-face interviews. Lung function was measured by trained physicians using electronic spirometers.

Compared with non drinkers, moderate alcohol intake was significantly associated with a 70.03 and 74.92 mL increase in FEV1 (The amount of air exhaled may be measured during the first second of forced breath) and FVC (is the total amount of

air exhaled during the FEV test), after adjusting for covariates. With regard to beverage type, red wine was associated with a 105.31 and 98.91 mL increase in FEV1 and FVC, respectively. Moderate alcohol intake was also associated with a 53.37 and 66.17 mL increase in FEV1 and FVC for liquor, respectively, and a 106.90 and 103.62 mL increase for red wine. In the longitudinal analyses, moderate alcohol intake and red wine were associated with a 67.77 and 103.77 mL increase in FVC, respectively. Moderate alcohol intake is associated with increased lung function, especially for red wine, the researchers find. They suggest that further studies are needed to investigate the potential mechanism.

Source: Wang D, Cao L, Zhou M, Ma J, Wang B, Yuan J, Chen W. Alcohol intake, beverage type, and lung function: a multicohort study of Chinese adults. *Ann N Y Acad Sci.* 2022 Jan 25. doi.org/10.1111/nyas.14744.

The 10th International Conference on Polyphenols and Health

The 10th International Conference on Polyphenols and Health will take place on 20 – 23 April 2022 at the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre in London. The meeting will provide updates on the latest trends, topics and developments in the field of polyphenols, food science and health. Topics covered will include: Analytical sciences

- measurement of polyphenols; Bioavailability, absorption and metabolism; Brain and cognition; Cancer; Cardiovascular disease; Clinical trials; Epidemiology; Gut microbiota; Infectious diseases; Mechanisms in action.

Registration is now open. icph.info



Impact of lifestyle and comorbidities on seropositive rheumatoid arthritis risk

Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is a systemic inflammatory arthritis in which primary prevention is key. A study used data from the Korean National Health Insurance Service (NHIS)-national sample cohort from 2002 to 2016 to assess the impact of lifestyle and comorbidities on RA development.

At baseline, demographic characteristics, socioeconomic status, type of residential area, lifestyle behaviours, and comorbidities (including the Charlson Comorbidity Index, CCI) were included.

A total of 517,053 participants were included in the analysis for seropositive RA occurrence. Mean follow up duration was 71.5 and 142.3 person-months for seropositive RA occurrence group and non-occurrence group, respectively. Seropositive RA was diagnosed in 1,948 participants (0.37%) during follow-up.

Being aged between 40 and 79, a higher CCI, and hyperlipidemia resulted in elevated hazard ratios (HRs) for seropositive RA, whereas male gender, city residence, moderate alcohol consumption, high regular exercise and a BMI between 23 and 34.9 kg/m² resulted in lower HRs.

The study demonstrates that high-intensity regular physical exercise and moderate alcohol consumption are negatively associated (protective) with seropositive RA occurrence, which are modifiable lifestyle habits that might aid the primary prevention of seropositive RA.

Source: Ro J, Kim SH, Kim HR, Lee SH, Min HK. Impact of lifestyle and comorbidities on seropositive rheumatoid arthritis risk from Korean health insurance data. *Sci Rep.* 2022 Feb 9;12(1):2201. doi.org/10.1038/s41598-022-06194-8.

Alcohol intake and cognitive decline in a middle-aged cohort

The association between alcohol intake and cognitive decline has been widely studied. Sex differences and cognitive domains affected by alcohol intake patterns make this topic overly complex. Researchers in Brazil investigated the effect of alcohol intake on cognition of middle-aged cohort.

7,595 participants from the Brazilian Longitudinal Study of Adult Health aged between 50 to 75 years at baseline were assessed during four years of follow up. Semantic and phonemic fluency, memory, and executive functions were assessed at baseline (2008-2010) and repeated during Visit 2. The study investigated the association between cognition and current abstainers, never drinkers, light drinkers, moderate drinkers, and heavy drinkers. Heavy alcohol intake accentuated the decline in executive functions for men, and in semantic fluency and memory for women. Never drinker's men also showed an accentuated decline in semantic fluency. Moderate alcohol intake slowed cognitive decline in phonemic fluency for men and women and in executive functions for women.

Having more than 14 drinks per week can impact executive functions in men and memory in women. In addition, alcohol consumption of 7 to 14 drinks per week may have a protective effect on gender-specific cognitive functions. These findings should be considered in public health policies and guidelines on alcohol and cognitive aging, the authors say.

Source: Salvador L, Giatti L, Viana MC et al. Sex differences in the association between alcohol intake and cognitive decline over four years in a middle-aged cohort: the Brazilian Longitudinal Study of Adult Health. *Eur J Neurol.* 2022 Mar 9. doi.org/10.1111/ene.15315.

Alcohol consumption and arterial stiffness

Authors of a study published in the journal *Cardiovascular Toxicology* state that the relationship between alcohol consumption and cardiovascular disease risk is complex. Low-to-moderate daily alcohol consumption (1–2 drinks/day) is associated with reduced risk, whereas greater amounts of alcohol consumption and a “binge” pattern of drinking are associated with increased cardiovascular risk and mortality. Arterial stiffness may help explain the complex relationship.

An integrated review summarises data from studies examining the associations between

alcohol consumption and pulse wave velocity, a gold standard measure of arterial stiffness.

Findings among the different studies reviewed were inconsistent with methodological challenges related to alcohol use assessment. While making specific conclusions regarding this relationship is tenuous; the data suggest that excessive alcohol consumption or a binge drinking pattern is associated with increased arterial stiffness.

Source: Hwang, CL., Muchira, J., Hibner, B.A. et al. Alcohol Consumption: A New Risk Factor for Arterial Stiffness?. *Cardiovasc Toxicol* 22, 236–245 (2022). doi.org/10.1007/s12012-022-09728-8



Prospective associations between alcohol consumption and psychological well-being in midlife

Alcohol consumption potentially influences psychological well-being in beneficial and harmful ways, but prospective studies on the association show mixed results. A group of academics from Denmark examined prospective associations between alcohol consumption and psychological well-being in middle-aged men and women.

The study sample included 4,148 middle-aged individuals from the Copenhagen Aging and Midlife Biobank who reported their alcohol consumption (average weekly consumption and frequency of binge drinking) at baseline in 2004 or 2006 and reported their psychological well-being (satisfaction with life and vitality) at follow-up in 2009–2011. Analyses were adjusted for sociodemographic factors, lifestyle, social relations, and morbidity.

For satisfaction with life at follow-up, lower scores were observed in men and women who were alcohol abstinent at baseline as well as in men with heavy alcohol consumption compared with moderate alcohol consumption at baseline. Men

with weekly binge drinking at baseline had lower satisfaction with life scores at follow-up than men with moderate frequency of binge drinking (1–3 times/month). In relation to vitality at follow-up, alcohol abstinence at baseline in men and women and heavy alcohol consumption at baseline in men were associated with lower scores compared with moderate alcohol consumption (yet in men these findings were not robust to adjustment for covariates).

Alcohol abstinence seems to be prospectively associated with adverse psychological well-being (vitality and life satisfaction) in men and women, while heavy alcohol consumption seems to be prospectively associated with adverse satisfaction with life in men. Finally, a prospective association between weekly binge drinking and lower life satisfaction was observed in men.

Source: Grønkjær M, Wimmelmann CL, Mortensen EL, Flensburg-Madsen T. Prospective associations between alcohol consumption and psychological well-being in midlife. *BMC Public Health*. 2022 Jan 31;22(1):204. doi.org/10.1186/s12889-021-12463-4.

Very-light alcohol consumption suppresses breast tumor progression in a mouse model

The relationship between alcohol consumption and cancer has no consistent results both in epidemiological studies and animal models. The authors of a study in the March edition of *Food Function* say that inaccuracy of alcohol consumption dosage in the experimental design of some studies might lead to inconsistent results that could lead researchers to misinterpret the effect of very-light alcohol consumption on cancer. To determine the effects of very-light alcohol consumption on cancer in a mouse study, the manner of gavage was used to control the alcohol consumption accurately. The impacts of age and time of drinking on cancer progression were also evaluated in this study. The researchers identified that a certain range of alcohol consumption (from 0.5% w/v to 2.0% w/v) can suppress tumor development in the breast metastasis mouse model by controlling the alcohol consumption dosage accurately. RNA sequencing analyses were performed in primary tumors and related metastases from the NC group and 1.0% w/v group.

The results of primary tumors and related metastases indicated that chronic very-light alcohol consumption downregulates breast tumor-associated oncogenes in primary tumors and regulates the immune system and metabolic system in metastatic carcinoma. To provide the public with drinking recommendations, eight commercial alcohol types were investigated at a dosage of 1.0% w/v. Two types of commercial alcohol, red wine (made in France, brand 1) and baijiu (made in China, brand 1), exerted excellent primary tumor and metastasis inhibitory effects. The untargeted metabolomic analysis of commercial alcohol by liquid chromatography-tandem mass spectrometry indicated that baijiu (brand 1) and baijiu (brand 2) exhibited a difference in compositions that can lead to their different anti-cancer effects. These results indicated that a certain range of very light alcohol dosages might have a potential human-cancer inhibition effect.

Source: Wang X, Jia M, Mao Y, Jia Z, Liu H, Yang G, Wang S, Sun B, Zhang H. Very-light alcohol consumption suppresses breast tumor progression in a mouse model. *Food Funct*. 2022 Mar 1. doi.org/10.1039/d1fo02089g.



Alcohol consumption, bone mineral density, and risk of osteoporotic fractures

The authors of a paper published in the January edition of the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, state that there is no comprehensive evidence of literature assessing the role of alcohol consumption in bone mineral density (BMD) and the risk of osteoporotic fractures. Their study aimed to quantitatively assess the dose-response relationship between alcohol intake and BMD and risk of osteoporotic fractures.

Medical research databases were searched from their inception to December 2021 for articles providing a quantifiable measurement of alcohol consumption for at least three categories and (1) a measurement of BMD (and dispersion as continuous variables) in some area of the body or (2) risk of osteoporotic fracture provided as relative risk (RR) or hazard ratio (HR), with a 95% confidence interval (CI) as the measure of the association of each category with alcohol intake. A total of 11 studies including 46,916 individuals with BMD assessment and 8 studies including 240,871 individuals with risk of fracture analysis were included.

Compared to non-drinkers, consumption of up to two standard drinks of alcohol per day was

correlated with higher lumbar and femur neck BMD values, while up to one standard drink of alcohol was correlated with higher hip BMD compared to no alcohol consumption.

Higher risk of hip fractures was found starting from three standard drinks of alcohol per day (RR = 1.33, 95% CI: 1.04; 1.69 for three alcoholic drinks/d, and RR = 1.59, 95% CI: 1.23; 2.05 for four alcoholic drinks/d) compared to no alcohol consumption, with no evidence of heterogeneity. Concerning the risk of any osteoporotic fractures, the risk steadily increased with higher intake of alcohol, although never reaching statistical significance.

In conclusion, there is consistent evidence that increased alcohol consumption is associated with higher risk of osteoporotic hip fracture; however, the role of alcohol at lower doses increases BMD. BMD is also higher in light drinkers compared to abstainers.

Source: Godos J, Giampieri F, Chisari E, Micek A, Paladino N, Forbes-Hernández TY, Quiles JL, Battino M, La Vignera S, Musumeci G, Grosso G. Alcohol Consumption, Bone Mineral Density, and Risk of Osteoporotic Fractures: A Dose-Response Meta-Analysis. *Int J Environ Res Public Health*. 2022 Jan 28;19(3):1515. doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19031515.

Healthy lifestyle score and incidence of glaucoma: The Sun Project

The relationship between modifiable risk factors, such as diet and lifestyle, and glaucoma remains controversial. A research team analysed the effect of the Mediterranean lifestyle (ML) on glaucoma incidence in the "Seguimiento Universidad de Navarra" (SUN) Project.

The SUN Healthy Lifestyle Score (SHLS) includes 10 healthy habits: never having smoked, moderate to high physical activity, Mediterranean diet adherence, moderate alcohol consumption, low television exposure, no binge drinking, short afternoon napping, meeting up with friends, working at least 40 h/wk, and low body mass index. The information was collected biennially through self-reported questionnaires.

During a median of 12 years of follow-up, 261 (1.42%) new cases of glaucoma were identified among 18,420 participants. After adjusting

for potential confounders, participants in the healthiest SHLS category showed a significantly reduced risk of glaucoma compared to those in the lowest SHLS category (adjusted HR = 0.51, 95% CI = 0.28-0.93). For each point added to the SHLS, the risk of glaucoma relatively dropped 5%.

Higher adherence to a Mediterranean lifestyle, including moderate alcohol consumption, measured by the SHLS, was significantly associated with a lower risk of developing glaucoma. Based on the study, the Mediterranean lifestyle is a protective factor for glaucoma incidence, the researchers conclude.

Source: Moreno-Montañés J, Gándara E, Gutierrez-Ruiz I, Moreno-Galarraga L, Ruiz-Canela M, Bes-Rastrollo M, Martínez-González MÁ, Fernandez-Montero A. Healthy Lifestyle Score and Incidence of Glaucoma: The Sun Project. *Nutrients*. 2022 Feb 12;14(4):779. Doi. org/10.3390/nu14040779.



Alcohol intake and bradyarrhythmia risk

There is a paucity of epidemiological evidence on alcohol and the risk of bradyarrhythmias. Therefore, researchers characterized associations of total and beverage-specific alcohol consumption with incident bradyarrhythmias using data from the UK Biobank.

Alcohol consumption reported at baseline was calculated as UK standard drinks (8 g alcohol)/week. Bradyarrhythmia events were defined as sinus node dysfunction (SND), high-level atrioventricular block (AVB), and permanent pacemaker implantations. Outcomes were assessed through hospitalisation and death records, and dose–response associations were characterised.

The study included 407,948 middle-aged individuals (and over a median follow-up time of 11.5 years, a total of 8,344 incident bradyarrhythmia events occurred. Increasing total alcohol consumption was not associated with an increased risk of bradyarrhythmias. Beer and cider intake were associated with increased bradyarrhythmia

risk up to 12 drinks/week; however, no significant associations were observed with red wine, white wine, or spirit intake. When bradyarrhythmia outcomes were analysed separately, a negative curvilinear was observed for total alcohol consumption and risk of sinus node dysfunction, but no clear association with atrioventricular block was observed.

The researchers conclude that, in this predominantly White British cohort, increasing total alcohol consumption was not associated with an increased risk of bradyarrhythmias. Associations appeared to vary according to the type of alcoholic beverage and between different types of bradyarrhythmias. Further epidemiological and experimental studies are required to clarify these findings.

Source: Samuel J Tu, Celine Gallagher, Adrian D Elliott, Dominik Linz, Bradley M Pitman, Jeroen M L Hendriks, Dennis H Lau, Prashanthan Sanders, Christopher X Wong, Alcohol intake and bradyarrhythmia risk: a cohort study of 407 948 individuals, *EP Europace*, 2022; euac007. doi.org/10.1093/europace/euac007

Alcohol consumption and risk of ventricular arrhythmias and sudden cardiac death

The authors of a paper published in the journal, *Heart Rhythm*, state that although previous studies have demonstrated a U-shaped relationship between alcohol and sudden cardiac death (SCD), there is a paucity of evidence on the role of alcohol specifically on incident ventricular arrhythmias (VAs).

Their study characterised associations of total and beverage-specific alcohol consumption with incident VA and SCD using data from the UK Biobank. 408,712 middle-aged individuals were studied over a median follow-up time of 11.5 years. Alcohol consumption reported at baseline was calculated as UK standard drinks (8 g of alcohol) per week. Outcomes were assessed through hospitalization and death records. A total of 1733 incident VA events and 2044 SCDs occurred.

For incident VA, no clear association was seen with total alcohol consumption. Although consumption of greater amounts of spirits was associated with increased VA risk, no other significant beverage-

specific associations were observed. For SCD, a U-shaped association was seen for total alcohol consumption, such that consumption of <26 drinks per week was associated with lowest risk. Consumption of greater amounts of beer, cider, and spirits was potentially associated with increasing SCD risk, whereas increasing red and white wine intake was associated with reduced risk.

In this predominantly white cohort, no association of total alcohol consumption was observed with VA, whereas a U-shaped association was present for SCD. Additional studies utilising accurately defined VA and SCD events are required to provide further insights into these contrasting findings, the authors say.

Source: Tu SJ, Gallagher C, Elliott AD, Linz D, Pitman BM, Hendriks JML, Lau DH, Sanders P, Wong CX. Alcohol consumption and risk of ventricular arrhythmias and sudden cardiac death: An observational study of 408,712 individuals. *Heart Rhythm*. 2022 Feb;19(2):177-184. Doi.org/10.1016/j.hrthm.2021.09.040.



The inflammatory food index and its association with weight gain and incidence of diabetes

Diet plays a central role in regulating inflammation and is closely related to the development of chronic diseases. Researchers in Brazil have developed an inflammatory food index (IFI) based on the relationship of food items with biomarkers of inflammation to evaluate its association with weight gain and type 2 diabetes.

A sample of 9,909 participants of the ELSA-Brasil study was analysed. Standardized measurements including interviews, anthropometry, and laboratory exams were performed at baseline and follow-up. A baseline food frequency questionnaire was used to derive IFI scores using reduced rank regression (RRR). The inflammatory pattern derived included 11 pro-inflammatory food groups: processed meat, red meat, pork, sugary soda, and hot dogs. The anti-inflammatory pattern included seven food groups: fruits, nuts, and wine. The IFI score, adjusted through logistic regression for multiple sociodemographic,

behavioral, and clinical covariates, including body mass index, predicted the development of a large weight gain (tertile 3 vs. 1: OR = 1.30; 95%CI 1.08-1.55). The score, adjusted for sociodemographic factors through proportional hazard models, predicted incident diabetes (tertile 3 vs. 1: HR = 1.26; 95%CI 1.04-1.52).

These findings support the hypothesis that subclinical inflammation caused by a pro-inflammatory food pattern, characterised mainly by greater ultra-processed food consumption, underlies weight gain and the development of type 2 diabetes.

Source: Bárbara P. Riboldi, Vivian C. Luft, Paula A. Bracco, et al. The inflammatory food index and its association with weight gain and incidence of diabetes: Longitudinal Study of Adult Health (ELSA-Brasil), Nutrition, Metabolism and Cardiovascular Diseases, Volume 32, Issue 3, 2022, Pages 675-683, ISSN 0939-4753, doi.org/10.1016/j.numecd.2021.12.022.

Dietary polyphenols and their role in oxidative stress-induced human diseases

Dietary polyphenols including phenolic acids, flavonoids, catechins, tannins, lignans, stilbenes, and anthocyanidins are widely found in grains, cereals, pulses, vegetables, spices, fruits, chocolates, and beverages like fruit juices, tea, coffee and wine. In recent years, dietary polyphenols have gained significant interest among researchers due to their potential chemopreventive/protective functions in the maintenance of human health and diseases. It is believed that dietary polyphenols/flavonoids exert powerful antioxidant action for protection against reactive oxygen species (ROS)/cellular oxidative stress (OS) towards the prevention of OS-related pathological conditions or diseases. Pre-clinical and clinical evidence strongly suggest that long term consumption of diets rich in polyphenols offer protection against the development of various chronic diseases such as neurodegenerative diseases, cardiovascular diseases (CVDs), cancer, diabetes, inflammatory disorders and infectious illness. Increased intake of foods containing polyphenols (for example, quercetin, epigallocatechin-3-gallate, resveratrol, cyanidin etc.) has been claimed to reduce the extent of a majority of chronic oxidative cellular damage,

DNA damage, tissue inflammations, viral/bacterial infections, and neurodegenerative diseases. It has been suggested that the antioxidant activity of dietary polyphenols plays a pivotal role in the prevention of OS-induced human diseases.

In a narrative review, the biological/pharmacological significance of dietary polyphenols in the prevention of and/or protection against OS-induced major human diseases such as cancers, neurodegenerative diseases, CVDs, diabetes mellitus, cancer, inflammatory disorders and infectious diseases have been delineated.

An open access review published in the the journal Frontiers in Pharmacology specifically focuses current understanding on the dietary sources of polyphenols and their protective effects including mechanisms of action against various major human diseases.

Source: Rudrapal M, Khairnar SJ, Khan J, Dukhyil AB, Ansari MA, Alomary MN, Alshabrm FM, Palai S, Deb PK, Devi R. Dietary Polyphenols and Their Role in Oxidative Stress-Induced Human Diseases: Insights Into Protective Effects, Antioxidant Potentials and Mechanism(s) of Action. Front Pharmacol. 2022 Feb 14;13:806470. doi.org/10.3389/fphar.2022.806470.



Alcohol consumption and the risk of mortality and myocardial infarction in patients with rheumatoid arthritis

Many studies have found that moderate alcohol consumption is associated with lower risks of mortality and myocardial infarction (MI). Researchers examined the potential effects of alcohol on all-cause mortality and myocardial infarction in rheumatoid arthritis (RA), a risk factor condition.

A cohort study (1995-2017) was conducted using medical records of rheumatoid arthritis patients from The Health Improvement Network in the United Kingdom (UK). Alcohol exposure was divided into non-drinkers, mild (1-7 UK units/week), moderate (8-14 UK units/week), moderate-high (15-21 UK units/week), and high (>21 UK units/week) consumption levels. Hazard ratios (HRs) for the relation of alcohol consumption to all-cause mortality and myocardial infarction were calculated, adjusting for covariates.

Of 30,320 rheumatoid arthritis patients, 5,994 deaths and 1,098 myocardial infarction cases occurred over 236,188 person-years. Mild-to-moderate alcohol use was associated with lower all-cause mortality in rheumatoid arthritis

patients, including those taking methotrexate. The multivariable HRs (95% CI) for mortality by alcohol use category were non-drinkers 1.0, mild 0.80 (0.75-0.85), moderate 0.74 (0.67-0.82), moderate-high 0.84 (0.72-0.98), and high 0.99 (0.86-1.15). Mild, moderate-high, and high levels of alcohol use were associated with lower risk of myocardial infarction among rheumatoid arthritis patients. The HRs myocardial infarction risk by alcohol use category were non-drinkers 1.0, mild 0.81 (0.70-0.94), moderate 0.84 (0.68-1.04), moderate-high 0.51 (0.35-0.74), and high 0.59 (0.42-0.84).

The researchers say that these findings suggest that mild-to-moderate alcohol use is associated with a lower mortality risk and overall alcohol use is associated with a lower myocardial infarction risk in rheumatoid arthritis patients, similar to the general population.

Source: Smith ID, Lu N, Wei J, Zhang Y, Choi HK, Bolster MB. Alcohol consumption and the risk of mortality and myocardial infarction in patients with rheumatoid arthritis. *Clin Exp Rheumatol*. 2022 Jan 25.

Alcohol drinking patterns have a positive association with cognitive function among older people

The relationship between moderate alcohol drinking or other alcohol drinking patterns such as frequency, beverage type, and situation of drinking and cognitive function is not sufficiently clear in older people. A study investigated the association between alcohol drinking patterns and cognitive function in community-dwelling Japanese people aged 75 and over.

The study was a cross-sectional design based on a prospective cohort study called the SONIC study. Subjects were older people aged 75-77 or 85-87 who voluntarily participated in 2016-2017. Drinking information was collected for daily drinking frequency, daily drinking intake, beverage type, and non-daily drinking opportunity. Cognitive function was measured using the Japanese version of the Montreal Cognitive Assessment (MoCA-J). Other potential confounding factors evaluated were age, sex, medical factors, and psychosocial factors.

The final number of participants analysed was 1,226. The MoCA-J score for participants who reported drinking alcohol 1-6 days/week was significantly higher than that for those who reported drinking none or every day. No significant difference in the MoCA-J score was observed relative to daily alcohol intake. In terms of beverage type, wine was associated positively with the MoCA-J score. Non-daily drinking opportunity was also associated positively with the MoCA-J score.

Moderate-frequency drinking, wine consumption, and non-daily drinking opportunities were associated with higher cognitive function in community-dwelling Japanese aged 75 and over. Further longitudinal studies are needed to clarify the causal relationships, the researchers state.

Source: Akagi Y, Kabayama M, Gondo Y, Masui Y, et al. Alcohol drinking patterns have a positive association with cognitive function among older people: a cross-sectional study. *BMC Geriatr*. 2022 Feb 28;22(1):158. Doi.org/10.1186/s12877-022-02852-8.



Glass of wine with dinner lowers type 2 diabetes risk, study finds

Research presented at a conference at the American Heart Association has found that those who drink a glass of wine with dinner are less likely to develop type 2 diabetes compared with people who eat without wine.

Researchers undertook analysis of more than 300,000 Britons on the UK biobank database. Over roughly 11 years of follow up, 8,600 patients developed type 2 diabetes. The study focused its attention on those who were defined as moderate drinkers. After adjusting for other potential factors, the risk of developing type 2 diabetes was 14 percent lower for those who drank with their food, with greatest risk reduction seen in those who consumed wine.

“The effects of alcohol consumption on health have been described as a double-edged sword

because of its apparent abilities to cut deeply in either direction — harmful or helpful — depending on how it is consumed,” said study author Hao Ma, from the Tulane University Obesity Research Center in New Orleans.

Noting the “mixed results” of previous studies that focused on how much people drink, Ma said it was time to examine other factors, saying that very few studies have focused on other drinking details, such as the timing of alcohol intake.

The study’s authors hypothesised that some chemicals found in wine, or possibly even the alcohol itself, could alter the way in which individuals metabolise glucose, therefore altering their risk of developing diabetes.

The study was presented at the American Heart Association Epidemiology, Prevention, Lifestyle & Cardiometabolic Health Conference in Chicago

Lifestyle-based healthy heart score and risk of frailty in older women

Evidence on the comprehensive role of lifestyle in frailty risk is scarce. A paper published in the journal *Age and Aging* assessed the association between a lifestyle-based Healthy Heart Score (HHS), which estimates the 20-year risk of cardiovascular disease (CVD), and risk of frailty among older women.

The prospective cohort study used data from the Nurses’ Health Study in the US. 68,416 women aged ≥ 60 year with a follow-up from 1990 to 2014 were included. The Healthy Heart Score was computed based on nine lifestyle factors, including current smoking, high body mass index, low physical activity, lack of moderate alcohol intake and unhealthy diet. Frailty incidence was assessed every 4 years from 1992 to 2014 as having ≥ 3 of the following five criteria from the FRAIL scale: fatigue, low strength, reduced aerobic capacity, having ≥ 5 illnesses and weight loss $\geq 5\%$.

During 22 years of follow-up, 11,041 total incident cases of frailty were ascertained. Compared to

women in the lowest quintile of the Healthy Heart Score (lowest estimated CVD risk), the multivariable-adjusted hazard ratio of frailty across quintiles was: Q2:1.67 (95% confidence interval 1.53, 1.82); Q3: 2.34 (2.15, 2.53); Q4: 3.54 (3.28, 3.83) and Q5: 5.92 (5.48, 6.38). Results were consistent for each frailty criterion, among participants with 0 frailty criteria at baseline, when using only baseline exposure or in 6-year-, 10-year- and 14-year-exposure lagged analyses, and after excluding participants with diabetes and CVD at baseline.

The study authors conclude that Healthy Heart Score, based on a set of modifiable-lifestyle factors, is strongly associated with risk of frailty in older women.

Source: Sotos-Prieto M, Struijk EA, Fung TT, Rimm EB, Rodriguez-Artalejo F, Willett WC, Hu FB, Lopez-Garcia E. Association between a lifestyle-based healthy heart score and risk of frailty in older women: a cohort study. *Age Ageing*. 2022 Feb 2;51(2):afab268. doi.org/10.1093/ageing/afab268.

Don’t blame the booze – serious health conditions are multifactorial

Published in *drinks business*, Dr Ignacio Sánchez Recarte, secretary general of the Comité Européen des Entreprises Vins (CEEV) argues that moderate drinking is being blamed for cardiovascular diseases and cancers by various agencies, but such

scaremongering is largely unfounded – serious health conditions are multifactorial.

thedrinksbusiness.com/2022/02/dont-blame-the-booze-serious-health-conditions-are-multifactorial/



Mapping problematic drinking trends over time in urban, semi-urban, and rural populations

Current alcohol public health policy in Australia is not uniform but is generally focused on restricting access and early prevention of problematic alcohol use. Semi-urban and rural populations are at greater risk of disease and other poor health outcomes due to a variety of factors. Little is known about problematic drinking patterns over time in semi-urban and rural populations.

A study published in the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* assessed patterns of problematic drinking (defined as both long-term risky and heavy episodic drinking over time) by age, sex, and mental health status among urban, semi-urban and rural populations. Four waves (2004 to 2016) of the Australian NDSHS (National Drug Strategy Household Survey) were analysed to assess problematic drinking of participants over 18 years of age.

The results indicate that results show young adults across all regions, males, and mentally well individuals in urban areas have reductions in the risk of problematic drinking over time. Middle-aged adults across all regions, females, and those with varying mental health presentations in rural areas have some increases in risk of problematic drinking over time.

The general conclusion is that targeted alcohol-related public health policy may need to change and focus on females, middle-aged individuals, and those living in rural areas. Programmes to support problematic drinking in people with mental health disorders may also need to be a priority.

Source: Bozic S, Vicendese D, Livingston M, Erbas B. Mapping Problematic Drinking Trends over Time in Urban, Semi-Urban, and Rural Populations. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*. 2022; 19(1):589. doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19010589

Hazardous drinking prevalence and all-cause mortality by hazardous drinking group in people aged 50 and older in Europe

A study examined educational inequalities in hazardous drinking prevalence among individuals aged 50 or more in 14 European countries, and explored educational inequalities in mortality in hazardous drinkers in European regions.

The study was based on waves 4, 5 and 6 of the Survey of Health Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE). Age-standardised hazardous drinking prevalence, and prevalence ratios (PR) of hazardous drinking by country and educational level were estimated and the relative index of inequality (RII) for all-cause mortality among hazardous drinkers and non-hazardous drinkers were estimated for each region (North, South, East and West).

In men, educational inequalities in hazardous drinking were not observed, while they were observed in women, having the highest hazardous drinking prevalence in the highest educational levels. Overall, the Relative Index of Inequality (RII) in all-cause mortality among hazardous drinkers was 1.12 [95%CI: 1.03-1.22] among men and 1.10 [95%CI: 0.97-1.25] among women. Educational

inequalities among hazardous drinkers were observed in Eastern Europe for both men and women. Educational inequalities in mortality among non-hazardous drinkers were observed in Southern, Western and Eastern Europe among men, and in Eastern Europe among women.

Higher educational attainment is positively associated with hazardous drinking prevalence among women, but not among men in most of the analysed European countries. Clear educational inequalities in mortality among hazardous drinkers were only observed in Eastern Europe. Further research on the associations between alcohol use and inequalities in all-cause mortality in different regions is needed, the authors conclude.

Source: Sergi Trias-Llimós, Marina Bosque-Prous, Nuria Obradors-Rial, Ester Teixidó-Compañó, Maria José Belza, Fanny Janssen & Albert Espelt (2022) Alcohol and educational inequalities: Hazardous drinking prevalence and all-cause mortality by hazardous drinking group in people aged 50 and older in Europe, *Substance Abuse*, 43:1, 152-160. doi.org/10.1080/08897077.2020.1773597



Attitude toward heavy drinking as a key longitudinal predictor of alcohol consumption and problems

Little work has considered the importance of a person's attitude toward heavy drinking when evaluated against other well-known predictors of alcohol use and related harm including drinking motives and drinker identity. A study evaluated the predictive utility of one's favourable attitude toward heavy drinking as a unique predictor of prospective drinking related outcomes when considered against descriptive and injunctive norms, drinking intention, drinking motives, and drinker identity.

Participants in the study included mandated students who violated a campus alcohol policy and received a brief intervention. Analyses examined baseline predictors, including attitude toward heavy drinking, perceived descriptive and injunctive norms, drinking intentions, drinking motives, and drinker identity, of prospective alcohol use outcomes and alcohol-related problems 1-month later.

The results indicate that one's attitude toward heavy drinking remains a significant predictor

of binge frequency, peak drinking, and alcohol-related problems when directly compared to norms, intentions, motives, and identity.

The researchers state that the study has important theoretical and intervention implications. Indeed, the finding that one's attitude toward heavy drinking remains a significant predictor of alcohol-related outcomes when intentions are included in the model has implications within the theory of planned behaviour. Furthermore, attitude toward heavy drinking demonstrates predictive utility when considered against descriptive and injunctive norms, drinking motives, and drinker identity.

These findings contribute to a growing literature suggesting that attitudes might be an important intervention target when the goal is to change drinking behaviour.

Source: DiBello AM, Hatch MR, Miller MB, Mastroleo NR, Carey KB. Attitude toward heavy drinking as a key longitudinal predictor of alcohol consumption and problems. *Alcohol Clin Exp Res.* 2022 Mar 6. [Doi.org/10.1111/acer.14800](https://doi.org/10.1111/acer.14800).

Prepartying and incapacitated rape: Is drinking a risk factor or an outcome?

Incapacitated rape (IR) is common in college and has been linked to heavier post-assault drinking and consequences, including blackouts. Following IR, college students may adjust their drinking in ways meant to increase perceived safety, such as enhancing situational control over one's drinks through prepartying, which is drinking before going out to a main social event. Although it is possible that prepartying could influence risk related to IR, it is unclear whether or how prepartying and IR are associated.

Researchers examined prepartying as both a risk factor and a consequence of IR, including the reasons for prepartying. Across two studies (Study 1 N = 1,074; Study 2 N = 1,753) of college women and men, associations between IR and prepartying motives, alcohol consumption, and alcohol-related blackouts were examined.

Within the cross-sectional Study 1, having a history of IR was associated with more alcohol consumption and blackouts when prepartying.

Past-year IR was associated with preparty motives related to interpersonal enhancement, intimate pursuit, and barriers to consumption, but not situational control. Within the prospective Study 2, preparty drinking was a prospective predictor of IR in the following year, but past-year IR did not predict subsequent prepartying.

The findings reveal a robust link between recent history of IR and prepartying regardless of gender. Prepartying was a prospective risk factor for subsequent IR. Although more research in this area is needed, addressing prepartying in alcohol interventions may contribute to the prevention of negative outcomes, including sexual assault, the authors say.

Source: Jaffe, A.E., Blayney, J.A., Graupensperger, S., Cooper, R. & Larimer, M.E. (2022) Prepartying and incapacitated rape: Is drinking a risk factor or an outcome? *Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research*, 46, 447– 457. doi.org/10.1111/acer.14779



The effects of cannabis and alcohol on driving performance and driver behaviour

Cannabis and alcohol are frequently detected in fatal and injury motor vehicle crashes. Epidemiological meta-analyses of cannabis and alcohol have found associations with an increase in crash risk.

A study aimed to quantify the magnitude of the effect of cannabis and alcohol-alone and in combination on driving performance and behaviour. A meta-analysis included 57 studies and 1,725 participants. Data was extracted for hazard response time, lateral position variability, lane deviations or excursions, time out of lane, driving speed, driving speed variability, speed violations, time speeding, headway, headway variability and crashes from experimental driving studies (i.e. driving simulator, closed-course, on-road) involving cannabis and/or alcohol administration. The researchers reported meta-analyses of effect sizes using Hedges' g and r .

Cannabis alone was associated with impaired lateral control [e.g. $g = 0.331$, 95% confidence interval (CI) for lateral position variability; $g = 0.198$, 95% CI for lane excursions) and decreased driving

speed ($g = -0.176$, 95% CI]. The combination of cannabis and alcohol was associated with greater driving performance decrements than either drug in isolation [e.g. $g = 0.480$, 95% for lateral position variability (combination versus alcohol); $g = 0.525$, 95% CI = for time out of lane (versus alcohol); $g = 0.336$, 95% CI for lateral position variability (combination versus cannabis); $g = 0.475$, 95% CI for time out of lane (combination versus cannabis)]. Subgroup analyses indicated that the effects of cannabis on driving performance measures were similar to low blood alcohol concentrations. A scarcity of data and study heterogeneity limited the interpretation of some measures.

This meta-analysis indicates that cannabis, like alcohol, impairs driving, and the combination of the two drugs is more detrimental to driving performance than either in isolation.

Source: Simmons SM, Caird JK, Sterzer F, Asbridge M. The effects of cannabis and alcohol on driving performance and driver behaviour: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Addiction*. 2022 Jan 26. doi.org/10.1111/add.15770.

E-scooter driving under the acute influence of alcohol

An open access paper, published in the *International Journal of Legal Medicine* assesses the effects of alcohol on the ability to drive an e-scooter. Driving tests reflecting real-life situations accompanied by medical examinations focusing on balance were conducted at different blood alcohol concentrations (BACs).

Fifty-seven subjects who consumed alcohol (28 female, 29 male) and 6 consistently sober subjects (3 female, 3 male) participated in the study. Alcohol was administered on a fixed schedule, and the individual drinking quantity was individually calculated in advance. Repeated runs through a fixed course were performed. Following each ride, a blood sample was taken for BAC determination, and medical tests were performed.

The research found that even at low BACs (0.21-0.60 g/kg), subjects showed a significant decrease in driving performance, to approximately 60% of the initial level. Differences in driving performance at different BAC ranges were observed for different obstacles, especially for the narrowing track, gate

passage, slalom, and driving in circles obstacles. Furthermore, worse Romberg and Unterberger test results (that assess balance) were correlated with worse driving performance. Sex-specific differences were not found.

Significant deteriorations in driving performance at BACs below 1.10 g/kg confirmed alcohol-related risk potential when using e-scooters. At this time, these findings may lead to the assumption of "relative driving impairment" in Germany.

The authors conclude that even at rather low BACs between 0.21 and 0.40 g/kg, there was a significant deterioration in driving performance under the influence of alcohol compared to non drinkers, which highlights the negative effects of alcohol on e-scooter driving.

Source: Zube K, Daldrup T, Lau M, Maatz R, Tank A, Steiner I, Schwender H, Hartung B. E-scooter driving under the acute influence of alcohol-a real-driving fitness study. *Int J Legal Med*. 2022 Feb 26. doi.org/10.1007/s00414-022-02792-3.



Student suggestions for addressing heavy episodic drinking

A study reported in the *Journal of American College Health* examined student suggestions for other students, campuses, and society to address heavy episodic drinking and associated harms. The study included 110 post-secondary students (27 males, 83 females), ages 17 to 30 years, from five universities across four Canadian provinces.

Purposeful sampling was used to screen in participants who drank in excess of Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines. As part of a larger study, focus groups were held with qualifying students examining heavy episodic drinking behaviours, suggestions and potential barriers to addressing heavy episodic drinking among post-secondary students.

Suggestions included providing earlier education on harms, receiving messages from respected peers and adults, and teaching how to drink in moderation. Barriers included peer pressure, not knowing own limits, and post-secondary drinking culture.

The study authors say that campuses might not be using the most effective methods to reduce heavy episodic drinking, may be facing unknown barriers, and need to understand perspectives of students in order to reduce heavy episodic drinking.

Source: Meister SR, Barker B, Flores-Pajot MC. Student suggestions for addressing heavy episodic drinking. *J Am Coll Health*. 2022 Feb-Mar;70(2):517-526. doi.org/10.1080/07448481.2020.1756827.

Adolescents' frequency of alcohol use and problems from alcohol abuse: Integrating dating partners with parent and peer influences

Despite the centrality of dating relationships for teens, it is unclear whether the influence of romantic partners' alcohol use on adolescents' under-age drinking is distinct from the influence of peers and parents.

To address this gap, a study used longitudinal data from a population-based sample of 825 adolescents, aged 12 to 19. Adolescents completed a survey using laptops for privacy, and a parent completed a survey separately. Alcohol use frequency and alcohol problems and included dating partners' drinking, adolescents' prior drinking, peers' drinking, parents' substance use, parental monitoring, and sociodemographic background characteristics were assessed.

Alcohol use frequency and alcohol problems were influenced by dating partners' alcohol use and dating partners' influence was stronger on older adolescents and male adolescents.

The researchers comment that the study results are useful for public health messaging and prevention efforts by demonstrating the influence of parents, peers, and dating partners on teens' alcohol use.

Source: Longmore MA, Severeid EE, Manning WD, Giordano PC, Clemens W, Taylor H. Adolescents' Frequency of Alcohol Use and Problems from Alcohol Abuse: Integrating Dating Partners with Parent and Peer Influences. *J Youth Adolesc*. 2022 Feb;51(2):320-334. doi.org/10.1007/s10964-021-01486-0.

The impact of 'Last Drinks' legislation in Australia

The authors of a study from Australia state that there is a growing emphasis on reducing alcohol fuelled violence. However, it is not known whether legislation to close night time entertainment districts (NEDs) earlier leads to decreased intoxication and fear of violence within the NED.

A study collected data before restrictive alcohol legislation from 2,670 participants and again after legislation was introduced from 1,926 participants. Patrons were systematically assessed with surveys and breathalyzers as they exited Brisbane NEDs.

Consistent with a 2-hour reduction in closing times, people left the NED substantially earlier.

The exit intoxication levels of people did not change between pre- and post-legislation. After the legislation was introduced, perceived risk of violence increased.

The research found that perceived alcohol scarcity leads to increased preloading and that restrictive legislation on alcohol sales did not lead to lower levels of inebriation.

Source: Grant J. Devilly (2022) The Impact of Last Drinks Legislation: Exit Intoxication and Perceptions of Risk within Nighttime Entertainment Districts in Brisbane, Australia, *Substance Use & Misuse*, 57:3, 425-431, doi.org/10.1080/10826084.2021.2019772.



17 is the new 15: Changing alcohol consumption among Swedish Youth

Researchers from Stockholm examined and compare trends in drinking prevalence in nationally representative samples of Swedish 9th and 11th grade students between 2000 and 2018. They also compared drinking behaviours in the two age groups during years with similar drinking prevalence.

Data were drawn from annual surveys of a nationally representative sample of students in year 9 (15-16 years old) and year 11 (17-18 years old). The data covered 19 years for year 9 and 16 years for year 11. Two reference years where the prevalence of drinking was similar were extracted for further comparison, 2018 for year 11 (n = 4878) and 2005 for year 9 (n = 5423). The reference years were compared with regard to the volume of drinking, heavy episodic drinking, having had an accident and quarrelling while drunk.

The prevalence of drinking declined in both age groups during the study period. The rate of decline was somewhat higher among year 9 students. In 2018, the prevalence of drinking was the same for year 11 students as it was for year 9 students in 2005. The volume of drinking was lower among year 11 students in 2018 than year 9 students in 2005. No differences were observed for heavy episodic drinking.

The authors conclude that the decline in drinking has caused a displacement of consumption so that today's 17-18-year-olds have a similar drinking behaviour to what 15-16-year-olds had in 2005.

Source: [Raninen J, Livingston M, Ramstedt M, Zetterqvist M, Larm P, Svensson J. 17 Is the New 15: Changing Alcohol Consumption among Swedish Youth. Int J Environ Res Public Health. 2022 Jan 31;19\(3\):1645. doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19031645.](#)

Cross-border purchasing unlikely to affect alcohol consumption

A study published by Public Health Scotland (PHS) examined the extent to which people might be travelling outside Scotland to purchase alcohol at a lower price, since the introduction of Minimum Unit Pricing (MUP) in Scotland.

Minimal cross-border purchasing was found to occur, and the report says that it is unlikely to be happening on a scale that would significantly affect alcohol consumption at a population level or impact the intended outcomes and aims of MUP. Interviews with retailers indicated that households in close proximity to the border made most use of cross-border purchasing, reflecting established shopping habits. None of the retailers had knowledge of people from Scotland appearing to travel to England to buy large quantities of alcohol. Analysis shows that substantial bulk purchasing would be needed for individuals to make significant savings whether purchasing in-person or online, once travel and delivery costs are taken into account.

The research also shows that licensing near the border did not display a shift from Scotland to England following the introduction of MUP legislation. Analysis of off-trade alcohol sales data in the combined areas of North East and North West England in the 12 months following implementation of MUP showed a small increase (1.14%). When a panel of over 1,000 Scottish adults was asked whether they have travelled to another part of the UK for the sole purpose of buying alcohol, only 3% responded that they had done so. Further evidence may arise on cross-border purchasing at a later date (both from within and out-with Public Health Scotland's portfolio on MUP evaluation), for example as part of the study on Drinking at Harmful Levels, which is due to be published by PHS later this year.

publichealthscotland.scot/publications/evaluating-the-impact-of-minimum-unit-pricing-mup-of-alcohol-in-scotland-on-cross-border-purchasing/



Youth drinking in decline: The implications for public health, public policy and public debate?

The authors of a study published in the *International Journal of Drug Policy* say that youth drinking has declined across most high-income countries in the last 20 years. Although researchers and commentators have explored the nature and drivers of decline, they have paid less attention to its implications. This matters because of the potential impact on contemporary and future public health, as well as on alcohol policy-making. This paper therefore considers how youth drinking trends may develop in future, what this would mean for public health, and what it might mean for alcohol policy and debate.

The study authors argue that the decline in youth drinking is well-established and unlikely to reverse, despite smaller declines and stabilising trends in recent years. Young people also appear to be carrying their lighter drinking into adulthood in at least some countries. This suggests that large short- and long-term public health benefits should be expected. The latter may however be obscured in population-level data by increased harm arising from earlier, heavier drinking generations moving through the highest risk points in the life course.

The likely impact of the decline in youth drinking on public and policy debate is less clear. The authors explore the possibilities using two model scenarios, the reinforcement and withdrawal models. In the reinforcement model, a 'virtuous' circle of falling alcohol consumption, increasing public support for alcohol control policies and apparent policy successes facilitates progressive strengthening of policy, akin to that seen in the tobacco experience. In the withdrawal model, policy-makers turn their attention to other problems, public health advocates struggle to justify proposed interventions and existing policies erode over time as industry actors reassert and strengthen their partnerships with government around alcohol policy. The authors argue that disconnects between the tobacco experience and the reinforcement model make the withdrawal model a more plausible scenario.

Source: John Holmes, Hannah Fairbrother, Michael Livingston, Petra Sylvia Meier, Melissa Oldham, Amy Pennay, Victoria Whitaker, Youth drinking in decline: What are the implications for public health, public policy and public debate?, *International Journal of Drug Policy*, Volume 102, 2022, 103606, ISSN 0955-3959, doi.org/10.1016/j.drugpo.2022.103606.

Data highlights prevalence of drink spiking in the UK and podcast series launched

Security staff platform, Get Licensed, has highlighted which area of the UK had the most reported cases of drink spiking in 2020. The company used Freedom of Information requests and information from police force to identify the prevalence of drink spiking across the UK.

The 10 areas with the most spiking incidents were Hampshire with 161; Essex 149; Nottinghamshire 119; Norfolk 100; West Yorkshire 83; Suffolk 79; Sussex 59; Leicestershire 43; Thames Valley 42; and Humberside with 38. In Nottinghamshire, local police received 16.88 reports of drink spiking for every 100 venues within a year. This was closely followed by Norfolk and Essex, which had 16.67 and 16.37 spikings per 100 venues.

A drink spiking podcast 'Pricks' was also launched on the 11th March. The five-part podcast series investigates the worrying issue of drink spiking

and is hosted by Mair Howells, Founder of I've Been Spiked.

The podcast is available on Amazon Music, Apple, Spotify- wherever you get your podcasts. ivebeenspiked #drinkspiking

cms.megaphone.fm/channel/pricks?selected=NSR2016181646



Department of Transport provisional estimates for drink driving

Provisional estimates for 2020 show that between 190 and 250 people were killed in accidents in Great Britain where at least one driver was over the drink-drive limit, with a central estimate of 220 deaths.

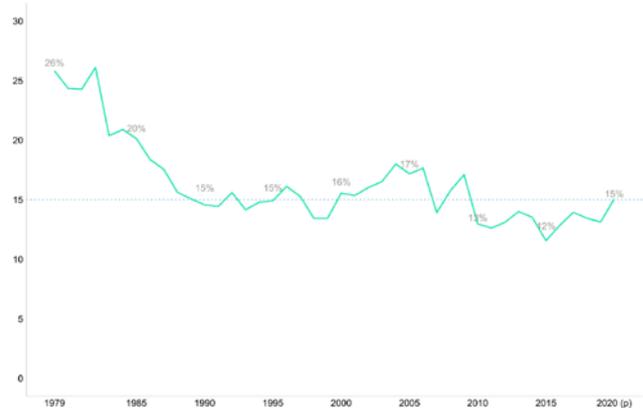
The provisional estimate of fatalities for 2020 is broadly in line with the last few years, and the reduction from 2019 is not statistically significantly different at the 95% confidence level.

The central estimate of 220 deaths is the lowest since 2015, though the overall number of reported road accidents also fell in 2020 as a result of the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, so that drink-drive deaths were a higher percentage of the total than in the previous year.

The prevalence of drink-driving in road deaths has fallen over time. In 1979, 26% of road deaths occurred in accidents where at least one driver or rider was over the drink-drive limit. This had fallen to 15% by 1989. Since then the percentage of

road deaths that are drink-drive related has varied between 12% and 18%. In 2020, the rate was 15%. [gov.uk/government/statistics/reported-road-casualties-in-great-britain-provisional-estimates-involving-illegal-alcohol-levels-2020/reported-road-casualties-in-great-britain-provisional-estimates-involving-illegal-alcohol-levels-2020](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/reported-road-casualties-in-great-britain-provisional-estimates-involving-illegal-alcohol-levels-2020/reported-road-casualties-in-great-britain-provisional-estimates-involving-illegal-alcohol-levels-2020)

Chart 2: Fatalities in reported drink-drive accidents, as a percentage of all fatalities: GB, 1979 to 2020



Fewest under-18s on record getting addiction help in England

It is feared that thousands of young people with drug and alcohol problems are missing out on addiction treatment owing to Covid, staff shortages and funding cuts, psychiatrists have said, as figures suggest the number able to get help has fallen to the lowest on record.

Analysis of data from the National Drug Treatment Monitoring System (NDTMS) found that 11,013 under-18s were in treatment for drug and alcohol dependency in England in 2020-21, which was 3,278 fewer (23% less) than in 2019-20. It was the sharpest annual fall since records began, and means 13,481 fewer children were being treated than at a peak in 2008-09.

89% of children in treatment had a problem with cannabis and 41% had a problem with alcohol. About 12% were struggling with ecstasy use and 9% (976) reported a problem with powder cocaine. The Royal College of Psychiatrists, which analysed the data, said the pandemic, together with “drastic”

historical funding cuts, was preventing young people from accessing the drug and alcohol treatment they need, potentially condemning them to a life of addiction. It said spending on youth addiction services in England had been cut by 41% in real terms since 2013-14, to £43.19m in 2020-21, with two regions cutting spending by 60% or more.

A spokesperson from the Department of Health and Social Care said: “We are taking action through our landmark 10-year drug strategy, backed by a record £780m for treatment – this includes £533m over three years to rebuild substance misuse treatment services in England to ensure those misusing drugs and alcohol get the support they need to recover.

“This is on top of our mental health recovery action plan, which includes an additional £79m funding that will be used to expand children’s mental health services in 2021-22.”

The Temperance Movement in the UK

in a radio broadcast, Melvyn Bragg and guests discuss the British experience of teetotalism from the early 19th Century when abstaining from

alcohol was a way for the new urban workers to get on in life.

[bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0013zl8](https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0013zl8)



Javid calls on families to help NHS by pushing loved ones to improve health

Family members should help loved ones to quit smoking, adopt better diets and stop taking drugs to help relieve the huge pressure on the NHS, the health secretary has said. Sajid Javid urged relatives to do what they could to persuade each other to lead healthier lives so the health service could better cope with the rising tide of illness it is facing.

In a major speech in March, he said families needed to play a key role in preventing ill-health because

demographic trends meant the NHS in years to come could buckle under the strain of treating a growing number of older people with several illnesses.

The NHS also had to do a lot more to stop people becoming unwell in the first place, he added, and no longer be just a “national hospital service” as a way of tackling its “unsustainable finances”, because its budget was taking up an ever larger share of public spending.

Insights from experience: alcohol and suicide

The Samaritans, in partnership with the Suicide Prevention Consortium has explored what the relationship between alcohol and suicide looks like for people living in England. They hope that by sharing their insights, they can encourage the Westminster Government and healthcare services to make changes that will help people to be better supported.

The survey found that

- There is no ‘one-size-fits-all’. The best support people received acknowledged their personal circumstances and made them feel trusted and listened to. Unfortunately, many people did not receive this level of care.

- For many people, alcohol is part of a bigger picture. They described drinking alcohol as a way of coping with issues involving their mental health, trauma or suicidal thoughts.
- Some people who had attempted suicide were dismissed or judged by healthcare staff due to drinking alcohol.
- There’s a need for further exploration of people’s experiences of alcohol and suicide, so that voices of lived experience are at the centre of policymaking.

samaritans.org/about-samaritans/research-policy/alcohol-suicide/

Northern Ireland alcohol-specific deaths

The number of annual alcohol-specific deaths in Northern Ireland reached 350 according to the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (Nisra). It was found:

- The total number of alcohol-specific deaths registered in 2020 was 351. This was an increase of 15 from the previous year (336)
- Almost two-thirds (66.4%) of the 351 deaths were male, and just over one third (33.6%) were female. Similarly, the age standardised mortality rate per 100,000 population of alcohol-specific deaths for males was twice that of the rate for females (24.9 and 12.3 respectively).
- Alcohol-specific deaths continue to be more prevalent among the 45-54 and 55-64 age groups, which together accounted for 64.7% of all alcohol-specific deaths registered in 2020.

nisra.gov.uk/system/files/statistics/Alcohol-Specific%20Deaths%20in%20NI%202020.pdf

Figure 3: Age-Standardised Mortality Rate (ASMR) of alcohol-specific deaths by sex, 2010-2020

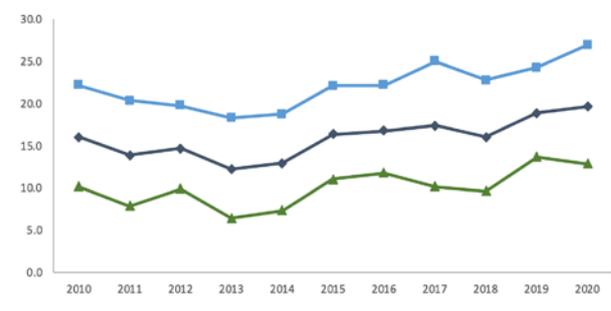
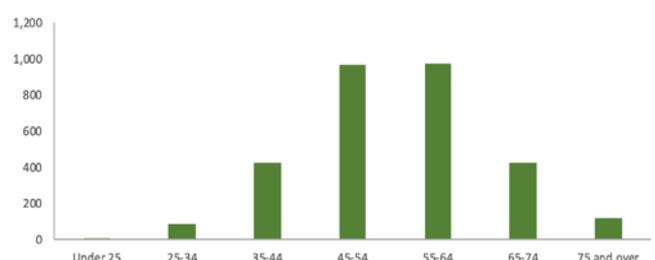


Figure 2: Alcohol-specific deaths by age, 2010-2020



Spanish Universities run competition to discourage underage drinking

For the past five years, the University Rey Juan Carlos in Madrid and the Spanish Spirits Federation - Espirituosos España have run a creative competition among university students. The annual competition rewards the campaign developed by students of the Rey Juan Carlos University that best promotes responsible alcohol consumption: either the promotion of moderate and responsible consumption in adults, or the prevention of consumption in minors.

For the latest competition, a group of five students in Advertising and Business Administration were responsible for the creativity and design of the winning graphic campaign. The campaign had two different creative lines. The first of these, called Temptations, under the slogan "Do not give in to temptation, mate", depicts different situations starring animals in which the campaign alludes to the need to overcome temptation and not be in a hurry to consume alcoholic beverages. The second creative line, called Datos (Data), contributes to the idea of not rushing the moment to start drinking, but this time providing curious facts about animal habits such as camels drinking water every ten days, or koalas spending more than 22 hours a day sleeping.

During the award ceremony at the end of last year, the Vice-Rector of the University, Mercedes del Hoyo, thanked Espirituosos España for its commitment to promoting responsible drinking habits, which has enabled the development of a public-private collaboration initiative, showing students the business reality beyond the campus. For his part, the Director of Espirituosos España, Bosco Torremocha, emphasised that after five years carrying out this competition with students from the Rey Juan Carlos University, great results can be measured. Bosco Torremocha is confident the the 2021 winning campaign will make society as a whole think about the need for minors not to consume a drop of alcohol.



Germany's drugs czar calls for higher age limits for alcohol

The German government's drugs czar has proposed raising the legal age when people can buy beer and wine from 16 to 18, and cracking down on alcohol and tobacco advertising.

In an interview told the Welt daily, Burkhard Blienert argued that there are "many medical reasons" to increase the purchase age even for lower-strength alcoholic beverages. He suggested that the rule allowing teens as young as 14 to drink beer, wine or champagne in the presence of their parents or guardians should be abolished.

Blienert also favours significant restrictions on alcohol, tobacco and gambling advertising.

Conservatives expressed concern about the proposed change to the drinking age.

EU lawmakers reject alcohol as cause of cancer

EU lawmakers watered down their warning to Europeans over alcohol's links to cancer, stressing only excessive consumption as a risk factor and recommending labels should include advice on moderate drinking rather than a blunter health message.

The European Parliament's resolution is non-binding but could guide new rules from the European Commission, such as those due in 2023 on labelling of alcoholic drinks and possible tax revisions to discourage consumption.

The amendments passed, rephrase the WHO references to say it recognised the safest level of alcohol consumption is none and saying that only "harmful" alcohol consumption should be seen as a risk.

They also steered away from recommending health warnings on alcoholic drinks labels and instead said they should include information on moderate and responsible drinking. The initial resolution had also called for a ban on sports sponsorship by alcoholic drinks companies, but the revised text instead said that ban should only apply to events that were mainly attended by minors.

Australia - Stay tasteful while tasting initiative



DrinkWise, in partnership with Australian Grape & Wine and the National Wine Foundation has launched a new 'Stay Tasteful while Tasting' campaign to help consumers make safer and more responsible decisions are consumption while visiting cellar doors.

Launched in February by the Minister for Health and Aged Care, the Hon. Greg Hunt MP, the initiative gives wine tasters access to new 'scratchies' to track how much they are drinking and eliminate

the confusion around how many tastings add up to a standard drink.

Stay tasteful while tasting resource packs – including the 'scratchie cards' and other responsible drinking resources are being distributed to over 1,800 cellar doors and tourism associations across Australia as part of the initiative.

DrinkWise CEO Simon Strahan commented that the education campaign is aimed at helping consumers make better choices when tasting wines. "In order to promote a healthier drinking culture, we need to continually provide education campaigns about alcohol," he said.

Australian Grape & Wine CEO, Tony Battaglione, added: "This new resource and education pack is the perfect way to display to consumers what they need to know to help them make the responsible choice and track their tastings when visiting cellar doors and wine festivals around the country."

Call for papers – Beer and Health Publication Award of €1,000

The Beer and Health Initiative offers a Publication Award of €1,000 for the best, most remarkable publication of the year focusing on moderate beer (or alcohol) consumption. Deadline of application is 31 March 2022.

Are you a scientist and did you publish a study in 2021 towards the biomedical, nutritional or (psycho) social aspects of moderate beer (or alcohol) consumption? You might be eligible for the Beer and Health Publication Award of €1,000!

beerandhealth.eu/the-beer-and-health-publication-award/

Kirin - Global Marketing Code for Responsible Drinking

In Japan, Kirin has developed new 'Global Marketing Guidelines for Responsible Drinking' for all its alcohol brands worldwide. These guidelines update the internal standards for all marketing activities, including a commitment to promote responsible drinking, along with warning labels for pregnancy and legal drinking age.

The company will also begin labeling the amount of net alcohol contained in its main alcohol products sold in Japan in May 2022, as part of its Zero Harmful Drinking initiative aiming to complete labeling of all alcohol products by the end of 2023. The target products are 350ml and 500ml cans of beer and RTD.

Labels will show the amount of net alcohol and a link to an educational website on responsible drinking (tekiryo.jp, Japanese).

By displaying not only the amount of net alcohol, but also a the educational website URL, Kirin Brewery says that it hopes that customers will deepen their knowledge of proper amount of alcohol to be consumed and responsible drinking, so that they can better consciously control the amount of alcohol they drink on their own, leading to the eradication of the harmful use of alcohol.

kirinholdings.com/en/newsroom/release/2022/0204_01.html



Carlsberg on track to meet Together Towards ZERO targets

In February, the Carlsberg Group's Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) Report 2021 reported steady progress by the company on carbon, water and responsible drinking. The company remains on track to meet the ambitious 2022 and 2030 targets of its transformative Together Towards ZERO programme.

The report highlights performance on each pillar of the programme. As part of the 'Towards ZERO irresponsible drinking', Carlsberg say that they have helped consumers make responsible choices, providing transparent product information and a fast-growing global portfolio of alcohol-free and low-alcohol brews. 2021 achievements include more than doubled alcohol-free brew (AFB) sales

volumes (114% growth) since 2015, including 17% growth in 2021 alone; supported the launch of new global alcohol marketing standards for e-commerce platforms and social influencers through the International Alliance for Responsible Drinking; 33.6 million people reached through responsible drinking campaigns.

carlsberggroup.com/media/48860/carlsberg-group-esg-report-2021.pdf



Cape Town to introduce new alcohol laws

The Western Cape provincial government is moving forward on proposed amendments to the Western Cape Liquor Act

Presenting his state of the province address on 15 February, premier Alan Winde said that the provincial cabinet has now granted in-principle approval for the first set of amendments to the Western Cape Liquor Amendment Bill to be drafted.

Winde said that this will be a two-step amendment process to ensure that 'quick-win amendments' can be made as soon as possible, and not be delayed by more significant changes that will require an extensive public participation process.

Some of the changes include putting measures in place to determine if a client is of legal drinking age, tightening up the process to prevent the illegal sale of alcohol and ensuring that outlets keep a record of all liquor sales.

Older affluent consumers drive US wine market

Growth of RTDs and spirits, plus the impact of Covid-19, has led to a loss of close to 15% of the regular wine drinking population in the US between 2018 and 2021. Although the wine category in the US holds an 11% volume share, wine volumes are expected to continue on a downward trajectory.

Those leaving the category are mainly younger legal drinking age (LDA+) consumers and those on lower incomes. Those who remain tend to be older and more affluent, Wine Intelligence data has revealed.

Changes in consumer priorities and habits mean that wine brand owners are re-engaging with an increasingly older and more affluent audience, and one that is seeking more premium wines. Wine spends have increased across all occasions, and Premium+ categories are expected to lead growth

over the next four years as volumes of wine under \$10 decline further.

The shift towards more moderate consumption is also reducing the number of young consumers shifting into the wine category.

"With consumers not drinking as often, when they do, they tend to choose their favourites over something they rarely drink," commented Richard Halstead, COO Wine Intelligence, a division of IWSR Group.

Is red wine really healthier than white?

Red wine is commonly thought to be more healthy than white wine, but is this true? Wine columnist Lettie Teague of the Wall Street Journal reviews the research with medical experts to look at the science.

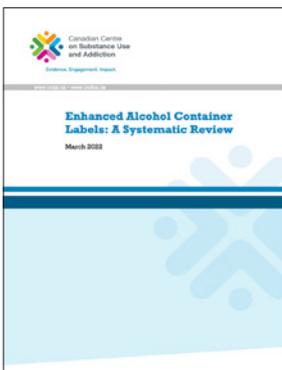
wsj.com/articles/is-red-wine-really-healthier-than-white-11643374803

Dry January 2022 insight

In a series of blogs over the course of 2022 Dr Richard, Piper, CEO Alcohol Change UK, will explore what Dry January is and isn't, how it works, including its successes and weaknesses. In his first blog, he reveals the level of participation in Dry January 2022.

alcoholchange.org.uk/blog/2022/dry-january-2022-did-it-match-the-heights-of-2021

Enhanced alcohol container labels: a systematic review



A report from the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction analyses the published research on alcohol labels with nutrition information, health warnings, standard drink information and low-risk drinking guidelines.

Key findings show alcohol drink labels with this

information improve consumer knowledge of alcohol-related risks, and, in some studies, decrease the intention to buy or drink alcohol, and the total amount of alcohol consumed. Evidence suggests there is public support for adding alcohol drink labels with this information.

ccsa.ca/sites/default/files/2022-02/CCSA-Enhanced-Alcohol-Container-Labels-Systematic-Review-Report-en.pdf

The future of low and no-alcohol wine

Wine has been on the back foot compared to beer when it comes to low- and no-alcohol. The IWSR Vinexposium Report 2021 suggests that while non-alcoholic beer is set to grow ahead of its low-abv counterpart, the opposite is expected to be true for wine.

Drinks Business interviewed drinks expert Christine Parkinson, co-founder of mindful consultancy Brimful Drinks and host of The Alcohol-free Sommelier podcast.

drinksretailingnews.co.uk/news/fullstory.php/aid/20841/Christine_Parkinson_on_the_future_of_low_and_no-alcohol_wine__96_Interview.html

US alcohol reform will boost competition

A report from the US Treasury in February highlighted concerns about the country's alcohol market and suggested reforms that could boost competition and lower prices for consumers.

The report also called for the Treasury Department's Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) to re-examine its labelling and other practices to prioritise labelling rules that protect consumers and public health, while reducing or eliminating any regulatory requirements that create compliance costs, potential barriers to new entrants, or burdens to small businesses.

home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/Competition-Report.pdf

Wine in Moderation refreshes its Wine Communication Standards

Wine in Moderation are providing their Members & Supporters with a brand-new Responsible Communication Package, that includes the tools to implement responsible communication that encourages moderation and responsibility by reinforcing the way wines are traditionally presented and communicated to consumers and ensures that commercial communication on wine products do not encourage or condone excessive consumption or misuse of any kind.



The Responsible Communication Package includes a self-regulation document with guidelines and principles that will help producers understand the dos and don'ts in commercial communication and a digital annex which will provide specific guidelines to be implemented in digital communication (website, social media, etc.)

wineinmoderation.eu/news/how-to-communicate-responsibly-wine-in-moderation-refreshes-its-wine-communication-standards-and-announces-a-new-accessible-tool-for-its-members-and-supporters

AIM – Alcohol in Moderation was founded in 1991 as an independent not for profit organisation whose role is to communicate “The Responsible Drinking Message” and to summarise and log relevant research, legislation, policy and campaigns regarding alcohol, health, social and policy issues.

AIM Mission Statement

- To work internationally to disseminate accurate social, scientific and medical research concerning responsible and moderate drinking
- To strive to ensure that alcohol is consumed responsibly and in moderation
- To encourage informed and balanced debate on alcohol, health and social issues
- To communicate and publicise relevant medical and scientific research in a clear and concise format, contributed to by AIM’s Council of 20 Professors and Specialists
- To publish information via www.alcoholinmoderation.com on moderate drinking and health, social and policy issues – comprehensively indexed and fully searchable without charge
- To educate consumers on responsible drinking and related health issues via www.drinkingandyou.com and publications, based on national government guidelines enabling consumers to make informed choices regarding drinking
- To inform and educate those working in the beverage alcohol industry regarding the responsible production, marketing, sale and promotion of alcohol
- To distribute AIM Digest Online without charge to policy makers, legislators and researchers involved in alcohol issues
- To direct enquiries towards full, peer reviewed or referenced sources of information and statistics where possible
- To work with organisations, charities, companies and associations to create programmes, materials and policies built around the responsible consumption of alcohol.

AIM Social, Scientific And Medical Council

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