

Alcohol and Your Health

All alcoholic beverages, including red wine, increase the likelihood of cardiac risks and cancer. No studies have found that drinking red wine or any other alcoholic beverages, protect against heart disease or any other diseases. There is good evidence that as little as one drink a day lead to hypertension or arrhythmia, specially atrial fibrillation.

It's also known that alcohol consumption increases the risk of certain cancers.

The idea that alcohol offered health benefit came from several small studies conducted in the 90s. In 1977, a large study, found that people who consume at least one alcoholic drink per day, were less likely to die from cardiovascular disease or any cause than those who did not drink alcohol at all. But later on it appears that the studies were tainted.

The conclusion that alcoholic beverages were not only safe, but actually beneficial were so appealing that objections fell on deaf ears.

Early studies suggested that red wine kept the arteries free from blood clot. Some people thought this explains why the French have low rates of heart disease, despite enjoying high intake of alcohol.

This FRENCH PARADOX was recently explained by the high consumption of monounsaturated fats French consume, such as olive oil and lots of fish, which contains heart healthy Omega-3 fatty acids . It turns out the studies supporting the benefits of red wine were flawed. Subsequent studies found that no alcoholic beverages is good for the heart.

New findings Now, 30 to 35 years later more carefully conducted studies have shown that alcohol is not safe. Multiple studies published in the past two years have showed that even a glass of alcoholic drink a day increases the risk of developing hypertension or arrhythmia, especially atrial fibrillation.

While red wine contains, resveratrol, a compound known to have antioxidant properties, no studies have confirmed that amount of resveratrol in red wine is beneficial . For that matter, no study has shown that drinking red wine is healthier than drinking, any other alcoholic beverage.

Alcohol and cancer. Even before alcohol was thought to connect with cardiovascular health, link between alcoholic consumption, and cancer had been verified. Alcohol contains ethanol which the body converts to estrogen. High estrogen level increase the risk of breast cancer. The breakdown of ethanol into acetaldehyde can cause liver, esophagus and head and neck cancers.

It is well known that regular alcohol consumption can cause cirrhosis of the liver and also changes in the brain , in addition to increase the risk of peptic ulcer disease and bleeding from stomach. It can also cause weakness in the heart muscle, called Cardiomyopathy and Congestive Heart Failure.

According to WHO, alcohol was a factor in 75000 cases of cancer and 19,000 cases of cancer deaths in United States in 2020 alone. In addition, alcohol is known to be associated with traffic accidents, domestic violence and marital problems.

I am not advising you not to drink alcohol at all. Occasional glass of wine should not be harmful. Sticking to no more than moderate drinking is important. If you drink alcohol, enjoy it with a meal, which will slow down the absorption of alcohol into your blood stream. Because alcohol is high in calories, drinking excessive amount can lead to weight gain, which increases the risk of Diabetes

Keshava Aithal

Dr Keshava Aithal

☎ 8 Double o