

[IMAGE]

Alcohol Attributed to Most Cancers

By Editorial Staff

A European study found that "an important proportion of cases of cancer can be attributable to alcohol consumption, especially consumption higher than the recommended upper limits." The "upper limits" were defined as one drink per day for women and two drinks per day for men.

Here in the states, alcohol use has also been linked to increased risk of several types of cancer for years, including cancers of the mouth, throat, voice box, esophagus, liver, breast and colon. How does alcohol affect the body?

The American Cancer Society warns long-term alcohol use has been linked to an increased risk of liver cancer. Regular, heavy alcohol use can damage the liver, leading to inflammation. This, in turn, may raise the risk of liver cancer. Regular consumption of even a few drinks per week is also associated with an increased risk of breast cancer in women. This risk may be especially high in women who do not get enough folate in their diet or through supplements. Alcohol can affect estrogen levels in the body, which may explain some of the increased risk. Reducing alcohol intake may be an important way for many women to lower their risk of breast cancer.

alcohol - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark In addition, alcohol use has been linked with a higher risk of cancers of the colon and rectum. The evidence for such a link is generally stronger in men than in women, although studies have found the link in both sexes.

As part of its guidelines on nutrition and physical activity for cancer prevention, the American Cancer Society recommends that people who drink alcohol limit their intake to no more than 2 drinks per day for men and 1 drink a day for women. The recommended limit is lower for women because of their smaller body size and because their bodies tend to break down alcohol more slowly.

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