

Chinese study suggests that alcohol increases angiographically significant coronary artery disease

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Among a large number of Chinese men presenting with chest pain or EKG changes, sequential subjects undergoing cardiac angiography were evaluated for obstructive coronary artery disease (CAD) lesions according to their reported recent alcohol intake. The study population consisted of 1,476 consecutive men 36 to 84 years of age; participants were categorized as nondrinkers, light drinkers, moderate drinkers, or heavy drinkers.

Adjusted odds ratios for angiographically proved CAD for light, moderate, and heavy drinking were 1.16 (95% confidence interval 0.68 to 1.94), 1.78 (1.35 to 2.27), and 2.18 (1.46 to 3.25). Compared to non-drinking, adjusted odds ratios were 1.03 (0.54 to 1.87) for drinking 0 to 15 years, 1.61 (1.28 to 2.14) for 16 to 30 years, and 1.98 (1.23 to 3.05) for >30 years. The authors concluded that moderate-to-heavy [alcohol consumption](#) increased the risk of CAD in Chinese men. CAD risk tended to increase with an increase in frequency and duration of drinking.

This was a very select group of patients (those presenting with chest pain or EKG changes), and not typical of the Chinese population. No information was available on drinking patterns or on previous alcohol intake. Further, a recent large population-based study from mainland China showed that consumers of alcohol were less likely to develop coronary disease, results similar to those in most Western populations. It

is not possible from the present study to say that the association of [alcohol intake](#) with CAD is different between Chinese and Western populations, as the present study gives results only for a very select group of patients.

The most important outcome regarding CAD is the occurrence of clinical events ([myocardial infarction](#), [cardiac death](#), etc.). The detection of such events requires long-term follow-up studies to be able to judge the overall effects of alcohol drinking on CAD.

More information: Zhou X, Li C, Xu W, Hong X, Chen J. Relation of alcohol consumption to angiographically proved coronary artery disease in Chinese men. *Am J Cardiol* 2010;106:1101

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