

Long working hours can lead to alcohol addictions

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A University of Otago, Christchurch, study has found that working at least 50 hours a week increases the risk of alcohol problems by up to three times.

The study used data from the Christchurch Health and Development Study which has followed more than 1000 people born in Christchurch in 1977 through to age 30.

The article has recently been accepted for publication by the journal 'Addiction'.

Lead author Dr Sheree Gibb says the study aimed to examine whether working hours were related to alcohol problems in early adulthood.

Data from more than 1000 participants at ages 25 and 30 showed a significant association between longer working hours and alcohol-related problems.

Longer [working hours](#) were associated with higher levels of [alcohol problems](#) including frequent alcohol use and alcohol abuse/dependence. People who worked 50 hours or longer on average a week were 1.8 to 3.3 times more likely to have alcohol-related problems than those who were not working, and about 1.2 to 1.5 times more likely to have alcohol-related problems than those who worked between 30 and 49 hours per week.

The higher [risk](#) of alcohol abuse for those who worked longer hours was evident in both men and women.

Dr Gibb says that this finding may suggest a need for consideration of policies and programmes targeted at individuals who work long hours, with the aim of reducing rates of alcohol-related problems amongst this group.

Provided by University of Otago

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