

# Reduction in risk of coronary heart disease from alcohol consumption

November 10 2011

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In a prospective, observational study of approximately 150,000 Norwegians, the investigators found that alcohol consumption was associated with a large decrease in the risk of death from coronary artery disease.

For men, the fully adjusted hazard ratio for cardiac death was 0.52 (95% CI 0.39 - 0.69) when comparing subjects reporting more than one drink/week in comparison with those reporting never or rarely drinking; for women, it was 0.62 (0.3-.23). There was little change in the hazard ratio when HDL-cholesterol (HDL) was added to the model, suggesting that very little of the lower risk of heart disease was due to an increase in HDL from [alcohol consumption](#).

Forum members considered this a well-done analysis. They were surprised at the very low amounts of alcohol intake reported by the subjects, with only 16% of males and about 8% of females reporting more than one drink/week. It is possible that the low levels of drinking, or perhaps over-adjustment in the multivariable analysis, led to the lack of effect of HDL. Most other studies have shown a much larger proportion of the [effect of alcohol](#) on [heart disease risk](#) to be associated with an increase in HDL.

**More information:** Magnus P, Bakke E, Hoff DA, Høiseth G, Graff-Iversen S, Knudsen GP, Myhre R, Normann PT, Næss Ø, Tambs K, Thelle DS, Mørland J. Controlling for High-Density Lipoprotein Cholesterol Does Not Affect the Magnitude of the Relationship Between

Alcohol and Coronary Heart Disease. *Circulation* 2011;124:  
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