

Alcohol increases activity of the resting brain in social drinkers

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Short-term alcohol intake can increase the activity of functional connections across the human brain when it is at rest, according to research published Oct 31 in the open access journal *PLOS ONE* by Panagiotis Bamidis and colleagues from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece.

Previous studies have shown that alcohol intake increases transmission of signals by the neurotransmitter GABA, present in 40% of the connections between [nerve cells](#) in the brain.

Here, the researchers monitored resting brain activity in healthy social drinkers who had consumed one drink, and found a significant increase in the activity of these connections.

According to the authors, this increase in baseline brain activity is at least partially due to the alcohol-induced increase in GABA-mediated signal transmission.

More information: Lithari C, Klados MA, Pappas C, Albani M, Kapoukranidou D, et al. (2012) Alcohol Affects the Brain's Resting-State Network in Social Drinkers. *PLoS ONE* 7(10): e48641.

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