

Women more at risk than men of smoking, drinking, study says

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Women who smoke and drink heavily are at a higher risk of early death than men who do the same, a study said Tuesday.

Data taken from a Europe-wide survey of some 380,000 people aged 40 and older, revealed that women faced a disproportional risk from the already well-known ill effects of heavy alcohol and [tobacco use](#).

Of the group, followed over an average period of 12 years, 26,411 died during the study period, said a report by French researchers published in the journal Bulletin epidemiologique hebdomadaire (BEH).

On a risk scale that places never-smokers on level "1", the [death risk](#) rose to 1.38 for men who smoked one to 15 cigarettes per day, 1.86 for those who smoked 16 to 26, and 2.44 for those who smoked more.

For women, the equivalent risks were similar: 1.32, 2.04 and 2.44 respectively, said the study.

But the picture changed drastically when alcohol was thrown into the mix.

For men who smoked more than 26 [cigarettes](#) and drank the equivalent of more than 30 grams of alcohol per day, the death risk on a separate scale was 2.38 compared to men who never smoked and drank up to a maximum of five grams of alcohol.

For women the risk rose to a massive 3.88.

"Women who consume excessive amounts of alcohol have a significantly higher risk from tobacco use than those who consume little or no alcohol," the study authors wrote.

They did not elaborate on the possible reasons for the stark difference.

The study also confirmed earlier findings that current [smokers](#) have [mortality rates](#) around 1.5 to three times higher than people who never smoked.

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