

Three drinks per day may raise liver cancer risk, but coffee lowers it

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Expert panel looked at data on over 8 million people to come up with risk factors for the disease.

(HealthDay)— People who have three or more alcoholic drinks per day could be raising their odds for liver cancer, according to a report from a panel of experts.

But there was good news for java lovers: The report, from the World Cancer Research Fund International, found "strong evidence" that drinking coffee might actually lower a person's odds for [liver cancer](#).

In drawing together the report, researchers tracked data on 8.2 million people who took part in 34 studies worldwide. There were a total of 24,500 liver cancer cases among the participants in the studies.

The objective was to determine how diet, weight and [physical activity](#) affect the risk of liver cancer. The studies were gathered and reviewed by a team at Imperial College London in England, and then independently assessed by a panel of international experts.

Along with the increased risk associated with having three or more [alcoholic drinks](#) a day, the investigators also found that being overweight or obese boosts the chances of developing liver cancer.

One other major global culprit driving liver cancer: foods contaminated by aflatoxins. Aflatoxins are toxins produced by fungi, often resulting from the improper storage of food. These toxins are generally found in foods from warmer, developing regions of the world, the researchers said.

Foods that may be affected by aflatoxins include cereals, spices, peanuts, pistachios, Brazil nuts, chili peppers, black pepper, dried fruit and figs, according to the report.

The findings about coffee and overweight/obesity are new. The findings about alcoholic drinks and [aflatoxins](#) were in a 2007 report.

According to the report's authors, you can reduce your risk of liver cancer by maintaining a healthy weight and by either not drinking or limiting alcohol intake to a maximum of two drinks a day for men and one drink a day for women, the new report said.

More information: The American Cancer Society has more about [liver cancer](#).

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