

Alcohol may fuel prostate cancer risk

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(HealthDay)—Drinking may raise the risk of prostate cancer, and the more men drink the greater their risk, a new analysis of 27 studies suggests.

Canadian and Australian scientists found a significant association between alcohol and [prostate cancer](#) risk, though they did not prove that drinking caused [prostate cancer risk](#) to rise.

Even low levels of drinking (up to two drinks a day) were associated with an 8 to 23 percent higher risk of prostate cancer when compared to no drinking, the researchers said.

"This new study contributes to the strengthening evidence that [alcohol consumption](#) is a risk factor for prostate cancer. Alcohol's contribution to prostate cancer will need to be factored into future estimates of the global burden of disease," said study co-author Tim Stockwell in a University of Victoria news release. He is director of the university's Centre for Addictions Research of BC in Canada.

Study co-author Tanya Chikritzhs leads the Alcohol Policy Research Team at Australia's National Drug Research Institute. "These findings highlight the need for better methods in research on alcohol and health," she said. "Past and future studies that demonstrate protection from disease due to low-level drinking should be treated with caution."

Prostate cancer is the fifth leading cause of cancer death in men worldwide.

Alcohol is a known risk factor for breast cancer and at least seven types of digestive system cancers, and alcohol may also increase the [risk](#) of cancers of the skin and pancreas, the researchers said.

The study was published online Nov. 15 in the journal *BMC Cancer*.

More information: The U.S. National Cancer Institute has more on [prostate cancer](#).

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