

Increasing level of alcohol intake may raise risk for cancer

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Adults who increase their alcohol consumption may have a higher risk

for alcohol-related cancers and all cancers versus adults who had sustained quitting or reduced levels of drinking, according to a study published online Aug. 24 in *JAMA Network Open*.

Jung Eun Yoo, M.D., Ph.D., from Seoul National University Hospital in South Korea, and colleagues used data from the Korean National Health Insurance Service (4.5 million participants) to examine the association between the reduction, cessation, or increase of [alcohol consumption](#) and the development of alcohol-related cancers and all cancers.

The researchers found that compared with the sustainer groups at each drinking level, the increaser groups had a higher risk for alcohol-related cancers and all cancers. Those who changed from nondrinking to mild, moderate, or heavy drinking levels had a higher risk than those who did not drink. A lower risk for alcohol-related cancer was seen among those with mild drinking levels who quit drinking versus those who sustained their drinking levels. Reducing heavy drinking levels to moderate or mild levels was associated with decreased [cancer risk](#) versus sustained heavy drinking. Compared with individuals who sustained their drinking levels, those with moderate or heavy drinking levels who quit drinking had a higher incidence of all cancer; however, this increase in risk disappeared when quitting was sustained.

"Findings of this study suggest that drinking cessation and reduction should be reinforced for the prevention of cancer," the authors write.

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