Higher alcohol intake may harm bone health in HIV patients
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Greater alcohol consumption is associated with lower serum levels of bone formation markers among patients living with HIV and substance use disorder, according to a study published online March 2 in Alcoholism: Clinical & Experimental Research.

Theresa W. Kim, M.D., from Boston University, and colleagues used data from 198 patients (median age, 50 years) seen at two HIV clinics who met diagnostic criteria for substance dependence or reported ever-injection drug use. The association between alcohol and bone turnover markers was evaluated.

The researchers reported that 13 percent of participants had ≥20 drinking days/month, with a mean of 1.93 drinks/day. Mean serum procollagen type 1 N-terminal propeptide (P1NP) was 73.1 ng/mL, and mean serum C-telopeptide type 1 collagen (CTx) was 0.36 ng/mL. There was a significant association between higher drinks/day and with lower P1NP (slope ≈1.09 ng/mL per each additional drink). Patients who drank on ≥20 days/month had lower P1NP (≈15.45 ng/mL) on average, versus those who did not. Similarly, there was an association seen between phosphatidylethanol level ≥8 ng/mL and lower P1NP. An increase in drinks/day was associated with a nonsignificant decrease in P1NP. There were no significant associations for either alcohol measure and CTx.

"If I were counseling a patient who was concerned about their bone health, besides checking vitamin D and recommending exercise, I would caution them about alcohol use, given that alcohol intake is a modifiable risk factor and osteoporosis can lead to fracture and functional decline," Kim said in a statement.

More information: Abstract/Full Text (subscription or payment may be required)

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