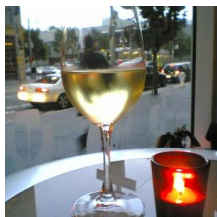


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By: Alexandra Lupu, Health News Editor



Grandparents, Cheers!

Study finds that light to moderate alcohol intake on elder individuals has beneficial effects upon the heart function and life span

A new research shows that moderate alcohol drinking in older subjects keeps away or slows symptoms and severity of cardiovascular disease. Previous studies have also found that a moderate intake of alcohol decreases blood levels of inflammatory markers such as C-reactive protein and interleukin-6. However, the medical team that performed the present study claim that the positive effects of alcohol upon elders' health is not due to the anti-inflammatory properties of alcohol, while the cause remains still unknown. The research was conducted by medical experts at the Institute on Aging at the University of Florida, Gainesville. They have investigated the data files of about 2500 elder people with ages ranging from 70 to 79 years, who did not suffer from heart disease. The results showed that the ones that participated in the study and did not consume alcohol at all were more prone to heart disease than those who drank alcohol moderately - one to 7 glasses of alcohol weekly. Therefore, these occasional alcohol drinkers were found to be 27.4% less likely to experience sudden death and had a 29% lower risk of getting to suffer from heart disorders. Lead researcher of the study, Dr. Cinzia Maraldi, concluded: "Light to moderate alcohol intake is associated with lower risk of cardiovascular disease in older subjects." The doctor also added: "The anti-inflammatory effect doesn't seem to explain these benefits." Medical experts warn that the positive effects upon one's health are strictly linked to a moderate intake of beverages and people should be aware of the fact that heavy drinking has extremely damaging effects on our mental and physical sanity. Therefore, heavy drinking must be avoided at all costs. "The net benefit of light to moderate alcohol consumption may vary as a function of sex, race and background cardiovascular risk. From this point of view, recommendations on alcohol consumption should be based, as any medical advice, on a careful evaluation of an individual's risks and benefits, in the context of adequate treatment and control of established cardiovascular risk factors," the researching team said.