Could a Drink a Day Lower Your Heart Failure Risk?

Having a drink each day might help lower a middle-aged person's odds for heart failure, a new study reveals.

The investigation suggests that men in their 40s, 50s and 60s who drink as much as seven comparably sized glasses of wine, beer and/or spirits per week will see their risk for heart failure drop by 20 percent.

For women the associated drop in risk amounted to roughly 16 percent, according to the study published online Jan. 20 in the European Heart Journal.

These findings suggest that drinking alcohol in moderation does not contribute to an increased risk of heart failure and may even be protective.

While the study found an association between moderate drinking and a lower risk of heart failure, it wasn't designed to prove cause-and-effect. And the findings shouldn't be used as an excuse to booze it up, the researchers said.

No level of alcohol intake was associated with a higher risk of heart failure, moderation is key. Moderate alcohol use may be protective.

Although it would not be recommended as a therapy' to protect the heart, it is clear that if alcohol is part of one's life, recommending moderate use is essential for cardiac protection, including the reduction of heart failure.

Heart failure occurs when cardiac muscle is no longer able to sufficiently pump blood. Over 23 million people around the world struggle with the health issue, which has a number of root causes, including prior heart attack, high blood pressure, heart disease, irregular heartbeat, drug use, chemotherapy, and high alcohol consumption.

For the purposes of the study, the investigators defined one drink as equaling 14 grams of alcohol -- the equivalent of a small glass of wine, about a half-pint of beer, and somewhat less than a shot of spirits, such as whiskey or vodka.

Heavy drinkers -- those who consumed 14 or more drinks per week -- did not appear to face any more or less of a risk for heart failure than those who never drank at all. However, the study authors stressed that this finding may have been skewed by the relatively small number of heavy-drinking participants.

An aspirin a day may not be necessary for everyone's heart health

If you are popping aspirin on a daily basis to lower your chances of having a heart attack or stroke, it might turn out that an aspirin a day may not keep the doctor away.

In fact, it could make things worse for your health.

Doctors will often tell patients to take a daily aspirin since doing so can prevent the formation of blood clots, which cause heart attacks and strokes.

A new study published in the Journal of the American College of Cardiology found that one in 10 people were either prescribed an aspirin regimen or daily they were taking one preventively when it wasn’t necessary.

To figure that out, researchers looked through the health records of almost 69,000 people receiving care at 119 cardiology practices throughout the United States.

The scientists determined the people who didn’t need to take the aspirin had too low of a risk to need it to prevent a heart attack or a stroke.

Someone taking aspirin with low risk for heart attack can cause more harm than good.

It can cause gastrointestinal bleeding, ulcers and the most dreaded place where (there is bleeding) inside the brain. The area can’t accommodate a lot of blood and you can die.

An unneeded aspirin regimen can also make your blood too thin, causing problems if you need surgery.

If you’re had a stroke or heart attack in the past, or fall into that bracket where an aspirin regimen is needed, you do still need to be careful. You need to make sure you’re taking the right dose.

The recommended dose for someone who needs to be on an aspirin regimen is 81 milligrams. That’s the equivalent of the dose of a baby aspirin in the United States. Taking anything more than that increases your risk for side effects.

People weigh the concern of the risks of heart disease over the risk of the side effects.

Those who have that less than 6% risk should be maximizing lifestyle reduction efforts rather than a medication such as aspirin.

Lifestyle reduction efforts include getting enough exercise, eating properly, getting enough sleep and reducing levels of stress.

The take-away from this study? Consult your doctor before beginning any sort of any medicinal regimen, and if you don’t need to be on an aspirin regimen, stop popping those pills and start stepping out for exercise.

Source: [http://www.cnn.com/2015/01/16/health/aspirin-for-health](http://www.cnn.com/2015/01/16/health/aspirin-for-health)
Sitting will kill you, even if you exercise

One of your favorite activities may actually be killing you.

Our entire modern world is constructed to keep you sitting down. When we drive we sit. When we work at an office, we sit.

And yet a new Study that’s running in the Annals of Internal Medicine found that this kind of sedentary behavior increases our chances of getting a disease or a condition that will kill us prematurely, even if we exercise.

Researchers from Toronto came to this conclusion after analyzing 47 studies of sedentary behavior. They adjusted their data to incorporate the amount someone exercises and found that the sitting we typically do in a day outweighs the benefits we get from exercise. Of course, the more you exercise, the lower the impact of sedentary behavior.

The studies showed sedentary behavior can lead to death from cardiovascular issues and cancer as well as cause chronic conditions such as Type 2 diabetes.

Physical inactivity has been identified as the fourth-leading risk factor for death for people all around the world, according to the World Health Organization.

Prolonged sitting, meaning sitting for eight to 12 hours or more a day, increased your risk of developing type 2 diabetes by 90%.

So what can you do to reduce the time you spend engaged in an activity that is not good for you?

The study authors did make some simple suggestions to help you sit less. One is to just be aware of how much you are sitting. That way you can make a goal of reducing that number a little bit each week.

If you are at work, you could try a standing desk or, make it a goal to stand up or walk around for a minute or three once every half an hour.

If you watch TV at night, don’t zoom ahead during the commercials with your DVR. Instead walk around or at least stand up during the show break.

Source: http://www.cnn.com/2015/01/21/health/sitting-will-kill-you
5 ways to eat healthier this year and lose weight in the process

Nutrition is a hot topic these days, yet many of our clients still struggle with consistently following through with the basics, and the stats show that missing the mark on many healthy habits is the norm. For example, the median daily intake of produce for U.S. adults is 1.1 servings of fruit and 1.6 servings of veggies, far below the minimum recommended five daily servings.

If you’re going to set just one goal for 2015, I think eating more produce should be it, but I’ve also listed four others below. I know you’ve heard them before, but they are without a doubt the most tried-and-true, impactful eating habits you can foster—both for your waistline and your health. And despite knowing them, you may not be achieving them, so they’re worth considering as you choose your resolutions.

If taking them all on at once seems overwhelming, try a step-ladder approach: focus on one change until it feels like a normal part of your daily routine, then add another, and another. Sometimes taking it slow ups the chances that behaviors will stick, so come December 2015, you’ll be celebrating a year of accomplishments.

Eat produce at every meal

There are numerous benefits to making produce a main attraction at mealtime. In addition to upping your intake of vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and fiber, eating at least five servings a day is tied to a lower risk of chronic diseases, including heart disease, stroke, and certain cancers. Fruits and veggies also help displace foods that pack more calories per bite. For example, one cup of non-starchy vegetables contains about 25 calories, compared to 200 in a cup of cooked pasta. And reaching for a medium-sized pear in place of a handful of chips, crackers, or cookies can slash anywhere from 50 to 200 calories.

How to do it: A good rule of thumb is to include a serving of fruit in each breakfast and snack, and two servings of veggies in every lunch and dinner. One serving is 1 fresh cup, about the size of a tennis ball. Whip fruit into a smoothie, add it to oatmeal or yogurt, or just bite right in.

Make water your beverage of choice

You’ve heard about the unwanted effect of drinking both regular and diet soda, but you may not be aware of some of the benefits of drinking more H2O. According to a study in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, people who get much of their daily fluid intake from plain water tend to have healthier diets overall, including more fiber, less sugar, and fewer high-calorie foods.

And in addition to hydrating you, water may be a helpful weight loss aid, by curbing appetite and boosting metabolism. One study found that people who drank about 7 cups of water a day, ate nearly 200 fewer daily calories compared to those who gulped less than one glass. Another found that when adults drank 2 cups of water right before eating a meal they ate between 75 and 90 fewer calories. And a German study concluded that consuming 16-ounces of water upped calorie burning by 30% within 10 minutes, an effect that was sustained for more than an hour.
**How to do it:** Reach for 16 ounces (2 cups) of water four times a day. And if you dislike the taste of plain water H2O, spruce it up. Add wedges of lemon or lime, fresh mint leaves, cucumber slices, fresh grated ginger or organic citrus zest, or a bit of mashed juicy fruit like berries or tangerine wedges.

**Choose whole-food starches**

Americans are eating far too many refined grains, including white versions of bread, pasta, rice, crackers, and pretzels, in addition to baked goods and cereal made with refined starch. The intake of whole grains, like brown rice, whole wheat, and quinoa is on the rise, yet the average intake of whole grains in the U.S. is less than one serving a day. Research shows that a higher whole grain intake is tied to a lower risk of heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes, and obesity. The latter may be because whole grains are filling: Their fiber helps delay stomach emptying, which keeps you fuller longer, delays the return of hunger, and helps regulate blood sugar and insulin levels, which are tied to appetite regulation.

In 2015, strive to replace refined grains—which have been stripped of their fiber and natural nutrients—with 100% whole wheat options (including gluten-free varieties if you need to or prefer to go gluten-free) or choose non-grain nutrient-rich starches, such as skin-on potatoes, root vegetables, squash, beans, and lentils. If weight loss is a goal, then moderate your portions rather than cutting out carbs altogether so you don’t miss out on the nutrients and sustained energy they provide, which are important for enhancing mood and exercise endurance, two other keys to successfully shedding pounds.

**How to do it:** Aim for just one to two servings of whole food starch in each meal, more if you’re more active, less if you’re less active. Great choices include oats or a puffed whole grain cereal at breakfast, quinoa or chickpeas in a salad at lunch, and sweet potato, squash, lentils, or wild rice at dinner. One serving is generally a half-cup of cooked starch, or the serving stated on the nutrition label for packaged foods.

**Budget your sugar intake**

Moderation works better than deprivation. Currently, the average American takes in a whopping 22 teaspoons of added sugar each day. Added sugar doesn’t include the type put in foods by Mother Nature (like the sugar in fruit) but rather the kind added to foods, like sweetened yogurt, or the sugar you spoon into your coffee. According to the American Heart Association, the daily target for added sugar should be no more than 6 teaspoons for women, and 9 for men—that’s for both food and beverages combined. It’s strict, but the target isn’t zero, which means you don’t need to banish sugar completely. Allowing yourself some of the sweet stuff can be a helpful way to stay on track, because swearing it off completely can result in intense cravings and rebound overeating.

**How to do it:** Start by cutting out processed versions of sweet stuff, like candy and packaged treats, and begin tracking how many food you buy that are pre-sweetened, such as yogurt or almond milk (sugar can even be lurking in store-bought tomato sauce and salad dressing). Next, opt for sweetened versions of packaged foods, or awesome DIY dressing whisks together extra virgin olive oil, balsamic vinegar, Dijon mustard, minced garlic, and Italian herb seasoning. Now that you’re slashed your sugar intake, strategically decide how to “spend” small amounts while staying within your budget.
Enjoy a little bit of dark chocolate (up to an ounce of 70% cocoa or greater) every day, or once or twice a week pre-plan splurges that won’t derail your overall healthy diet, like splitting a dessert with a dinner companion, or buying one rally worthwhile cookie from a bakery. If you don’t feel you need regular treats, that’s great. Many of my clients find that less sugar they eat the less they crave. But if your sweet tooth strikes, or it’s a special occasion, don’t succumb to all-or-nothing thinking (e.g. “I can’t have any” or “I had a little so I might as well go all out!”). People who lose weight and keep it off long-term find ways to strike a sane and healthy balance.

**Become more mindful**

One of the most powerful resolutions you can make for 2015 is to work on raising your eating awareness, which includes tuning into hunger and fullness cues, as well as slowing your eating pace, and identifying non-physical eating triggers (boredom, habit, or a bad day). Paying attention to body signals has been shown to be as effective, as a formal class for weight loss and slowing down your eating can naturally help you eat less while feeling more satisfied.

One University of Rhode Island study found that fast eaters downed more than 3 ounces of food per minute, compared to 2.5 ounces for medium-speed eaters, and 2 for slow eaters. Finally, becoming more mindful can help you realize when you’re drawn to food even though you’re not physically hungry, which can help you address your emotional needs in non-food ways.

**How to do it:** To hone your mindfulness skills, start keeping a food journal to record not just what and how much you eat, but also as any emotional notes, such as craving something crunchy because you feel angry, or wanting to eat while watching TV.

Also try committing to not doing anything else while you eat, at least once a day. Take breaks between each bite, check in with your body, focus on the flavors and textures of your food, and stop when you feel like you’re had enough, even if you haven’t cleaned your plate.

It may feel awkward at first to slow down and eat solo, but this practice can help you to catch yourself eating too fast, ease you into a slower pattern, and allow you to break mindless eating patterns, which may be the key to a happier and healthier year ahead.

*Source: [http://www.cnn.com/2015/01/14/health/feat-healthy-eating-habits](http://www.cnn.com/2015/01/14/health/feat-healthy-eating-habits)*

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### 25 life Lessons from Albert Einstein

1. Intellectual growth should commence at birth and cease only at death.
2. Everyone should be respected as an individual, but no one idolized.
3. Never do anything against conscience even if the state demands it.
4. If people are good only because they fear punishment, and hope for reward, then we are a sorry lot indeed.
5. A perfection of means, and confusion of aims, seems to be our main problem.
6. Love is a better teacher than duty.
7. If you can’t explain it simply, you don’t understand it well enough.
8. No problem can be solved from the same level of consciousness that created it.
9. Insanity: doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.
10. Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow.
11. It has become appallingly obvious that our technology has exceeded our humanity.
12. Everything that can be counted does not necessarily count; everything that counts cannot necessarily be counted.
14. Everything should be as simple as it is, but not simpler.
15. A man should look for what is, and not for what he thinks should be.
16. Any man who reads too much and uses his own brain too little falls into lazy habits of thinking.
17. A person who never made a mistake never tried anything new.
18. It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge.
19. Anyone who doesn’t take truth seriously in small matters cannot be trusted in large ones either.
20. Great spirits have always encountered violent opposition from mediocre minds.
21. Education is what remains after one has forgotten what one has learned in school.
22. Logic will get you from A to B. Imagination will take you everywhere.
23. Anger dwells only in the bosom of fools.
24. Information is not knowledge.
25. Never lose a holy curiosity.