

Lakeview Community Wellness Center Orthopaedic Connection

Bones and Joints. And Alcohol ??

By Thomas J. Haverbush, M.D.
Orthopaedic Surgeon

Transforming patient information into patient understanding.

Please don't think I am making this stuff up! I have been aware of this information for awhile, but haven't got around to writing about it until now. So here goes.

I wouldn't want anyone to begin drinking alcohol (if you don't already) because of something I wrote. If you do drink alcohol on occasion (moderately of course!) you will read the rest of the article with interest I think.

Several medical studies have concluded that moderate alcohol consumption:

- may reduce your risk of heart disease and heart attacks
- can reduce the risk of certain arthritis types
- slow bone loss reducing the risk of osteoporosis

OK, What is Moderate?

National Institutes of Health defines moderate alcohol consumption as:

- Men, 2 drinks a day
- Women, 1 drink a day
- Anyone over 65, 1 drink a day

One Drink

- 12 oz bottle of beer or a wine cooler
- 5 oz glass of wine
- 1 ½ oz of 80 proof distilled spirits

Alcohol's Positive Effects

- Decreased bone turnover (that's a good thing!)
- Reduces body's inflammation
- Possibly decreased risk of osteoarthritis
- Decrease in risk of developing Rheumatoid Arthritis
- Possibly good for heart health

Studies that are reported are different from scientific controlled trials of medication for example. The studies are just another piece of information which suggests certain things.

A Lot Isn't Better

If a little alcohol may be good, a lot certainly isn't better.

Overindulging

- Precipitates gout attacks
- Adversely affects the liver
- Worsens side effects of certain drugs

- Can inhibit bone formation
- Causes balance problems and falls and you end up in the hospital
- You can end up in jail!

What You Should Do

- If you drink, do so moderately as above
- If you smoke, stop
- If you have gout, don't drink
- Calcium 1,200mg per day
- Vitamin D 2000 international units per day

Conclusion

I do not recommend one or two drinks per day to improve bone health. No physician would do that.

My point is that if it is your lifestyle to drink alcohol, you need to know there appears to be no deleterious effect and there may be some positive effects (and as the current saying goes "That's a good thing").

Please remember that anyone can make an appointment to see Dr. Haverbush at his office in Alma, at 315 Warwick Dr., across from Gratiot Medical Center. Call 989-463-6092 to make an appointment.

And don't forget every article I have written for Lakeview Area News is on my Website, www.orthopodsurgeon.com. Check it out. I specialize in you.

Be well.

Dr. Haverbush