

Alcohol and Women

Introduction

Even in small amounts, alcohol affects women differently than men. In some ways, heavy drinking is much more risky for women than it is for men. There is a difference for men and women because, in general, men weigh more than women. Alcohol is passed through the digestive tract and is dispersed in the water in the body. The alcohol becomes more diluted based on the amount of water in the body, and women have less water in their bodies than men. Because of this a woman's brain and organs are exposed to more alcohol before it is broken down, these differences play a role in both the short and long term effects of alcohol on women. I chose this topic because I thought it would be interesting to find out what the effects and disadvantages of this, somewhat risky, behavior are.

Section 1: Background and Statement

Healthy People 2010

http://www.healthypeople.gov/Document/html/uih/uih_4.htm#subsubuse

This site provides general information on how different substances, when abused, affects the body. It also provides information on how violence, injuries and the environment contribute to our health. There are also graphs and charts that explain the information. The site does not say much about how specifically it affects women.

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

http://www.acog.org/publications/patient_education/bp068.cfm

I think this site was good for background information. It was not overly detailed but provided just enough information. It covered the basics of what are the effects of alcohol on woman and the problems associated with them.

Oregon Counseling

<http://www.oregoncounseling.org/ArticlesPapers/Documents/ETOHBIOfx.htm>

This Web site was very informative and provided detailed information on the different areas of the female anatomy and how alcohol affects them differently. The site also explains the effects on the unborn child. I think this is an excellent article on how alcohol affects women.

Be Responsible About Drinking

http://www.brad21.org/alcohol_and_women.html

This Web site was created by the parents of a boy who died as a result of alcohol poisoning. The site was somewhat informative. It provided more information on alcohol and its general effects. It would be a good site for general information on the negativities of alcohol but not for how it affects women.

Section 2: Research

International Journal of Epidemiology

<http://ije.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/content/full/29/1/57>

Background Low to moderate alcohol consumption is associated with reduced mortality, primarily due to a reduction in coronary heart disease (CHD). Conversely, heavy drinking increases mortality, mainly due to hemorrhagic stroke and non-cardiovascular diseases. It is important to identify the threshold of alcohol consumption above which the balance of risk and benefit becomes adverse. We examine the relationship between reported alcohol consumption, cardiovascular disease (CVD) risk factors, a 10-year CHD risk score and hypertension in women.

Conclusions This study provides biological support for an inverse association between alcohol intake and CHD in women, associated with favorable changes in lipid and lipoprotein risk factors. Women consuming 1–14 units/week had a reduction in CHD risk, but there was an increased prevalence of hypertension among those consuming ≥ 15 units/week. These data suggest that, in terms of the reduced risk of CVD, women should be advised to restrict their alcohol consumption to ≤ 14 units/week.

Alcohol and Breast Cancer in Women

<http://jama.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/abstract/279/7/535>

Objective: — to assess the risk of invasive breast cancer associated with total and beverage-specific alcohol consumption and to evaluate whether dietary and non-dietary factors modify the association.

Conclusion: Alcohol consumption is associated with a linear increase in breast cancer incidence in women over the range of consumption reported by most women. Among women who consume alcohol regularly, reducing alcohol consumption is a potential means to reduce breast cancer risk.

Medical Risks for Women Who Drink Alcohol

<http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/fulltext/121441699/PDFSTART>

Objective:

To summarize for clinicians recent epidemiologic evidence regarding medical risks of alcohol use for women.

Conclusions:

In general, advising non-pregnant women who drink alcohol to have fewer than two drinks daily is strongly supported by the epidemiologic literature, although specific recommendations for a particular woman should depend on her medical history and risk factors.

Alcohol Intake and Bone Metabolism in Elderly Women

<http://www.ajcn.org/cgi/content/full/ajcn;72/5/1206>

Objective: The objective of this study was to examine the relation between alcohol intake and BMD, calcitropic hormones, calcium absorption, and other biochemical indexes of bone and mineral metabolism in elderly women.

Conclusions: Moderate alcohol intake was associated with higher BMD in postmenopausal elderly women. The protective effect of alcohol may have been a result of lower bone remodeling due to reduced parathyroid hormone concentrations or factors such as increased estrogen concentrations.

Section 3: Statistics**Center for Science in the Public Interest**

<http://www.cspinet.org/booze/women.htm>

The information provided on this site was very simple and easy to understand. The data was broken down into sections and it was very concise. The information was presented as a fact sheet and not as a very detailed statistical report. The report was done eight years ago and I think it would be better if the data were more current.

Alcohol Concern: Women and Alcohol

http://www.alcoholconcern.org.uk/files/20040602_095617_Women%20and%20alcohol%20update%20May%202004.pdf

I found this Web site to be very interesting because the data given was presented not only textually but also graphically. To me, the graphs were more interesting to look at than just the plain data. The information was very detailed and somewhat current.

Alcohol Use among Women of Childbearing Age

<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5113a2.htm>

The information presented was very bland. Reading the information was very tedious because it was just paragraphs of words and numbers. The few graphs that were included were not very interesting. I did not find this article interesting.

Use of Alcohol and Other Drugs among Women

<http://www.ncadd.org/facts/women.html>

There was very limited information provided in this article. It was a short summary on the consumption rates, patterns and trends of the use of alcohol by women. The article mostly served as a link to other Web sites. I do not think this is a very good site to get statistical data on the effects of alcohol on women.

Section 4: Consumer Information

Center for Drug and Alcohol

<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/public-health/dpb/publications/womenalc.htm>

This site was very interesting to read. It first gave background information on what your blood alcohol level should be, what its health effects and social effects were. The site also provided the reader with contact information for various substance abuse agencies.

Western Piedmont Community College: Consumer Information

<http://www.wpcc.edu/pdfs/ConsumerInfo.pdf>

This article is from the handbook of a community college. It gives only about a paragraph on the risks of alcohol consumption and even less about how alcohol affects women.

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism

<http://www.niaaa.nih.gov/NR/rdonlyres/57DD6ADD-6209-42BA-8831-754AD7580FBF/0/WomensBrochure.pdf>

This pamphlet was very educational and provided very good details on the topic of women and alcohol. I found it most interesting because it was somewhat interactive. It asked the reader questions, that caused you to think, and also provided very useful answers. It explains the reasons why some women begin drinking and the consequences that this habit can have.

Effects of Alcohol on Women

http://www.fasdcenter.samhsa.gov/documents/NI_WYNTK_Effects_Women.pdf

The information presented on this site was somewhat inadequate. It provided very little detail to the effects of alcohol on women. If I were a consumer who knew very little or nothing at all about how alcohol affects women I don't think this article would have been very helpful.

Conclusions

Section 1: Background and Statement

Best Web site:

<http://www.oregoncounseling.org/ArticlesPapers/Documents/ETOHBIOfx.htm>

I thought this was the best site because it was very informative. The information was broken down into easy to read sections and it was very concise. The site highlights the impacts of alcohol on different areas of the female anatomy and on an unborn child. It also talks about the effects of drugs, prescribed and un-prescribed, on the female body.

Worst Web site:

http://www.healthypeople.gov/Document/html/uih/uih_4.htm#subsabuse

I think this was the worst site because it provided very little information on how alcohol affects women. The article spoke about substance abuse in general and it only covered each issue briefly.

Section 2: Research

After evaluating the research Web sites I have learned that although alcohol does not cause breast cancer, its consumption and the risk of invasive breast cancer are positively associated in women. Based on the research, the more a woman drinks, the higher the risk of contracting invasive breast cancer. I was aware of some of the effects that alcohol has but I never knew that it was associated with invasive breast cancer. I think that this research was very well conducted and it gave good information on the topic.

Section 3: Statistics

According to Alcohol Concern, in 2002, 86% of women over the age of 16 reported drinking alcohols, compared to 91% of men. The site also mentions that women in managerial/professional households are more likely to drink regularly than those in routine or manual households. In 2001, 2170 women died from illnesses directly attributable to alcohol. The average weekly consumption of women aged 16 to 24 years is 14 units compared to 3.8

units for women over 65 years. Young women (16 to 24) tend to cram their drinking into heavy drinking sessions with 49% consuming their alcohol over one to three days.

Section 4: Consumer Information

Best Web site:

<http://www.niaaa.nih.gov/NR/rdonlyres/57DD6ADD-6209-42BA-8831-754AD7580FBF/0/WomensBrochure.pdf>

I think this was the best site for consumer information because it was very detailed and was written in an easy to understand way. The site was very user friendly and provided links and resources for consumers to find additional information.

Worst Web site:

<http://www.wpcc.edu/pdfs/ConsumerInfo.pdf>

I think this was the worst site because it did not provide enough information for consumers who needed it. This site was not a very good source of information for my topic because it was more of a guideline for students going to that school than it was for general consumer information on the effects of alcohol on women.

Back to Betty C. Jung's Web site	http://www.bettyjung.net/
Back to Web site Critique Reports Directory	http://www.bettyjung.net/Pch201wsreports.htm

Alcohol and Women (Class Handout)

- The best Web site I found that provided background information on how alcohol affects women is -
<http://www.oregoncounseling.org/ArticlesPapers/Documents/ETOHBIOfx.htm>. I thought this was the best site because it was very informative. The information was broken down into easy to read sections and it was very concise. The site highlights the impacts of alcohol on different areas of the female anatomy and on an unborn child. It also talks about the effects of drugs, prescribed and un-prescribed, on the female body.
- After reviewing the four web sites the site that I found to be best for research information was - <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/fulltext/121441699/PDFSTART>. The site provided information on the effects that alcohol have on a woman's body. The researchers did a very comprehensive study on how alcohol affects different organs and functions of the female anatomy.
- The best site I found for statistical data was -
http://www.alcoholconcern.org.uk/files/20040602_095617_Women%20and%20alcohol%20update%20May%202004.pdf. I think this article was the best because the information is more current than on the other sites I reviewed.
- The best site for consumer information was -
<http://www.niaaa.nih.gov/NR/rdonlyres/57DD6ADD-6209-42BA-8831-754AD7580FBF/0/WomensBrochure.pdf>. I think this was the best site for consumer information because it was very detailed and was written in an easy to understand way. The site was very user friendly and provided links and resources for consumers to find additional information.