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Light-to-moderate drinking and incident heart failure: The Norwegian HUNT study**Janszky I, Gemes K, Ahnve S, László K D, Laugsand L E, Vatten L and Mukamal K J**
Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Norway**Aim:** We analyzed the association between light-to-moderate alcohol intake and the risk of heart failure (HF).

Methods & Results: We studied 60,665 individuals free of HF who provided information on alcohol consumption in a population-based cohort study conducted in 1995-97 in Norway. Sociodemographic factors, cardiovascular risk factors and common chronic disorders were assessed by questionnaires and/or by a clinical examination. The cohort was followed for a first HF event for an average of 11.2 ± 3.0 years. Mean alcohol consumption was 2.95 ± 4.5 g/day; 1588 HF cases occurred during follow-up. The quantity of alcohol consumption was inversely associated with incident HF in this low-drinking population. The risk was lowest for consumption over three but less than six drinks/week; the multivariate hazard ratio when comparing this category to non-drinkers was 0.67 (95% CI: 0.50-0.92). Among problem drinkers based on CAGE questionnaires, total consumption showed no favorable association with HF, even when overall consumption was otherwise moderate. Excluding former drinkers and controlling for common chronic diseases had minimal effect on these associations. Frequent alcohol consumption, i.e., more than five times/month, was associated with the lowest HF risk; the adjusted hazard ratio comparing this group to alcohol intake less than once/month was 0.83 (95% CI: 0.68-1.03). We found no evidence for a differential effect according to beverage type, nor that the competing risks of death from other causes modified the association.

Conclusion: Frequent light-to-moderate alcohol consumption without problem drinking was associated with a lower HF risk in this population characterized by a low average alcohol intake.

Biography

Janszky I has an MD and a PhD degree from Semmelweis Medical University, Budapest, Hungary and from Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, Sweden, respectively. He is currently working at the Department of Public Health and General Practice/Medical Faculty/Norwegian University of Science and Technology as Professor of Epidemiology. His main focus of research is on risk and prognostic factors for cardiovascular diseases.

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