



Concerns: Drinking Costs

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Heavy drinking may be quite hazardous to HIV-positive people, according to a 13-year study of 1,855 people living with the virus in Baltimore. Heavy drinking was defined as having more than four drinks per day for men and three for women or 14 drinks per week for men and seven for women. Moderate drinking was defined as any consumption less than those thresholds. The highest rate of death from any cause, at 8.5 percent per year, was among those whose physicians documented them as recent heavy drinkers. Researchers found that self-reported nondrinkers and moderate drinkers with a recent medical history of heavy drinking were a respective 7.3 times and 3.5 times more likely to die of liver-related causes, compared with self-reported moderate drinkers with no medical history of heavy drinking. The investigators concluded that for people with HIV, any heavy drinking was linked to a raised overall risk of death, while only recent heavy consumption was linked with liver-related death.

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