

## Mixed Messages From France

A Government White Paper was released in August recommending that wine be exempted from the Loi Evin in France. It proposes that wine be treated the same way as in Spain, namely as 'a food', due to its well established health benefits and the fact that it is habitually drunk with meals.

It is, however, unlikely that the powerful anti-alcohol lobby groups in France will allow the proposal to pass into law. "Every time representatives of the wine industry manage to put their views to the Prime Minister, anti-alcohol representatives are never far behind to contradict or counter argue points put forward by the wine trade" comments Sharon Nagel of La Journée Vinicole. However, an amendment is due to be debated in October which would authorise collective advertising for wine by regional marketing bodies such as the CIVB.

Perhaps in response to the championing by anti-alcohol groups of a court case in Lille which aims to

indict the drinks industry for not providing sufficient information on the dangers of drinking during pregnancy, the Minister of Health - Philippe Douste-Blazy also announced in August that he intends to have mandatory labels on alcoholic beverages. These will warn women of the risks of drinking during pregnancy and recommend abstinence. Nagel states "This is more than a mere coincidence and it highlights the dissension within the government over alcohol related issues, particularly over wine, which is France's most emblematic drink". In addition, 500 million euros have been set aside for a new five year anti-drug campaign run by MILDT (an inter-ministerial committee). Its goal, already incorporated in to the ministry of Health policy, is to reduce per capita alcohol consumption in France by 20% by 2008. It will also better enforce advertising regulations for alcohol and tobacco.

*With thanks to Sharon Nagel of La Journée Vinicole, please visit [www.journee-vinicole.com](http://www.journee-vinicole.com).*

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## London Conference Reminder - 27th October 2004

### 'Education Messages on Alcohol to Young People - How do we get Through?'

#### Presenters include:

**Kate Winstanley**, The Portman Group

**Carole Brigaudeau**, The Amsterdam Group

**Dr. Lynn Owens**, Secretary to the Nursing Council on Alcohol,

**Russell Tullett**, NHS Trust Portsmouth Alcohol and Drugs substance abuse youth team.

**Ruth Joyce OBE**, The Home Office.

**Claes Fick**, Senior Vice President, Corporate Affairs, V&S Group Vin & Spirit

Reports on industry initiatives from **Bacardi Martini**, **Allied Domecq**, **The British Beer and Pub Association** and the **Wine and Spirit Association**

#### Discussion and Open forum with invited panel

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## Germany

A new tax levy on RTDs has been passed by German lawmakers. The lower house of parliament overruled objections from the upper house against a special tax on the drinks. The lower house had voted for the tax in May but objections from the upper house had delayed the proposal from becoming law.

RTDs were identified in a recent study in the country as one of the main causes of alcoholism among young people. Under the new law, the drinks will be labelled 'May not be given to persons under 18 years', and taxed at between E0.80 and E0.90 a bottle, depending on size and alcohol content, the health ministry said in a statement.

"The price increase caused by the special levy is the most effective means of reducing the consumption of alcopops among underage young people," Marion Caspers-Merk, the government's special drugs representative stated.

Diageo, the world's largest wine and spirits group, has asked the federal constitutional court in Karlsruhe to block the law immediately. The request was denied, but the court had agreed to review the legislation.

Similarly, the Austrian health minister Maria Rauch -Kallat has also proposed a tax on RTD spirits brands.

## France

France's Ministry of Health is planning to broaden the range of pre-mix alcoholic drinks on which duty is levied as part of a campaign to check alcohol consumption among young people.

The change in the scope of the duty, which is levied at •5.55/decilitre of pure alcohol, is being made within the framework of an amendment to a government public health bill.

New popular brands with young people such as Smirnoff Ice, Eristoff Ice or Boomerang will be liable for the duty as well as pre-mixed beers, such as tequila-flavoured Desperado and a range of strong alcohol drinks sold in bottles of less than 60 centilitres and fortified by sugar additives and flavourings.

## Europe

The Wine and Spirit Association has issued a reaction to the European Commission's request that the UK amend its policies relating to excise duties and cross-border shopping for tobacco and alcohol.

Quentin Rappoport, director of the WSA, said: "This debate about the sanctions and penalties to be applied to cross-border shoppers fails to address the main problem: the high level of cross-border shopping, which is brought about by the enormous tax differential between the UK and its neighbouring countries...Cross-border shopping distorts consumer choice and costs the Chancellor of the Exchequer millions of pounds each year... As soon as UK excise duty on alcohol is reduced to bring it more into line with other European countries, customers won't feel the need to cross waters and spend their money elsewhere, and smugglers, who tend to fuel underage drinking, will be out of business."

## Scotland

Whyte and Mackay must remove its logo from a Scottish football team's shirts for European games. UEFA, Europe's football governing body, has ruled that the whisky maker cannot advertise on Hibernian's shirts because of a ban on high-strength alcohol sponsorship.

The team will replace the logo with a blue Whyte and Mackay shield. The whisky company has confirmed, however, that the continental ban will not affect the £1 m, five-year deal it agreed with the team earlier this year.

## Russia

Russia's lower house of parliament has passed a bill at the second reading which restricts the advertising of beer on TV and radio.

If the upper house also approves the bill, beer ads will be banned from TV and radio between the hours of 7am and 10pm.

Even when ads can be shown they may not show humans, animals or animated characters or imply that beer is connected with social or athletic success – these restrictions will also apply to adverts in newspapers and magazines.

## US Parents Fail on Alcohol Education

Parents are not doing well in their efforts to prevent teenagers from drinking, according to the annual Uhlich Teen Report Card.

The Child Welfare League of America, in a summary of the report findings, said that teens cite television as the major influence on their opinions about the world, but that they turn to parents and family members to gain perspective on the news. (Friends and peers were a distant second, followed by clergy).

When asked to grade adults' performance on a variety of issues, the teenagers gave adults a 'B-' in fighting the war on terrorism; a 'C+' in how well they discipline young people; a 'C' in stopping

teens from running away; and a 'C-' in understanding why teens leave home.

For the sixth year running, parents got the worst grades for stopping young people from drinking ('F'). Failing grades ('D'-'F') were also consistently given for 'Really Listening to and Understanding Young People,' 'Getting Rid of Gangs,' 'Stopping Young People from Smoking,' and 'Stopping Young People from Using Drugs.'

Parents got the best grades for 'Providing a Quality Education for Young People' 'Creating Job Opportunities for the Future,' and 'Spending Quality Time with their Families'.

## UK Government Insists on Duty Stamps

The Government has insisted it will proceed with its plan to put duty stamps on bottles of whisky despite strong opposition from MPs and the distilling industry. In his reply to the all-party Scottish affairs committee at the House of Commons, the Chancellor, Gordon Brown dismissed claims it could put some small producers out of business. He conceded, however, that rather than putting them over the top of the bottle, he might be prepared to put them on the back of the bottle or on the label.

This small concession was greeted as "a major step forward" by Campbell Evans, government and consumer affairs director of the Scots Whisky Association.

The committee had called on Brown to reconsider the duty stamps plan, saying it was a "19th century solution to a 21st century problem". But Brown said the stamps were a "timely and effective solution" to the £600 m a year growing spirits fraud problem.

In the official Treasury response to the committee report, the Chancellor dismissed claims that the cost of changing bottling lines would be too much for smaller manufacturers and promised government help for those in need. He said the big distillers already had the technology.

The tax stamps are due to come in by 2006.

## UK: Ofcom Proposes Alcohol Advertising Changes

The UK media regulator Ofcom has announced new draft rules on the television advertising of alcoholic drinks.

Subject to consultation responses, Ofcom will propose significant toughening of the rules in relation to linking alcohol with anti-social or self-destructive behaviour; sexual content; irresponsible handling/serving of alcohol and youth appeal.

"There have been long-standing rules in all these areas but the wording has not proved effective in some cases. We anticipate that these changes, if adopted, would result in a marked difference in

the tone of some advertising, particularly to the extent that it relates to or feeds off youth culture," a statement said.

However, it is also proposing to drop the rule which prohibits alcohol advertising from showing people drinking in the workplace and, subject to some safeguards, to allow children and teenagers to appear in alcohol advertising if they are part of a family group which is eating or socialising calmly and responsibly.

The draft rules have been drawn up in response to views expressed by the drinks industry and by consumer groups that

## Drink Driving Ad Campaigns Work

Media ad campaigns meant to curb drunken driving can reduce alcohol-related traffic accidents by 13 percent, suggests a new U.S. study.

One factor for this success may be that the campaigns were released to a large audience over a long period of time and were thoroughly tested before they were aired, the study authors suggested.

"The studies reviewed here indicated that under some conditions, well-executed mass media campaigns can contribute to a reduction in alcohol-impaired driving and alcohol-related crashes. They also suggest that such campaigns are cost-saving," the authors wrote.

For example, one of the campaigns cost \$403,174 per month. But the estimated savings in medical costs, job productivity losses, pain and suffering, and property damage were \$8,324,532 per month, the study found.

The researchers, from the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, a division of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, noted that most of the ad campaigns they reviewed were aired in communities with fairly high levels of enforcement against drunk driving.

That makes it unclear whether these campaigns would have been as effective in communities with less aggressive drunken driving measures.

existing rules, inherited from the Independent Television Commission, were insufficiently focused.

In particular there is concern to discourage advertising likely to be strongly attractive to children and young teenagers, advertising which appears to condone anti-social behaviour related to drinking, particularly with implications of excess consumption and advertising with an implied linkage between drinking alcohol and sexual success.

For further information visit [www.ofcom.org.uk](http://www.ofcom.org.uk).

## UK Crackdown on Anti-Social Drinking

The UK Government launched a policing campaign at the beginning of July to tackle alcohol-fuelled violence in town and city centres. The eight week campaign ran throughout the summer and concentrated on 92 communities across the country. UK figures show that alcohol fuels around half of all violent crime and that at peak times, 70% of hospital accident and emergency department admissions are due to alcohol.

The powers available to be used by the police to tackle underage and binge drinking include closing rowdy premises for 24 hours, issuing fixed penalty notices for being drunk and disorderly and 'naming and shaming' off licences, bars and clubs who are convicted of selling to underage drinkers.

The Home office published their initial results at the beginning of August. Four weeks into the campaign, the police and their partners had visited more than 14,000 premises (10,883 on and 3,268 off licences). 5% of the premises were found to have committed an offence. Out of 646 sting operations, 51% of on licence and 29% of off licence premises were found to be selling to under 18s. The police issued 1869 fixed penalty notices for causing harassment, being drunk and disorderly and other alcohol related offences. Alcohol had been confiscated from 1,764 under 18s and from 2,553 adults in a 'designated area'.

The Home secretary, David Blunkett said "... we need to do more to tackle the alcohol related violence and disorder which blights too many of our communities. We are no longer prepared

to tolerate our towns and city centres becoming no-go areas on Friday and Saturday nights. We are determined to tackle the problem head on with tough enforcement action and work with the alcohol industry to tackle irresponsible selling".

Britain's pubs have given their full support to the campaign. Mark Hastings, Director of Communications at the British Beer Association said, "We fully support the Home Office enforcement campaign to crack down on known trouble makers and trouble spots, and endorse firm action being taken against any pub that is breaking the law.... However, the overwhelming evidence is that the vast majority of the 60,000 pubs in the UK are law abiding, well managed by responsible licensees and not committing any offences".

## French Government Health Initiatives

500 million euros have been allocated to a new five year anti-drug campaign run by the French inter-ministerial committee MILDT. The objectives of the campaign include reducing the average per capita alcohol consumption by 20% by 2008 and better enforcement of advertising regulation for alcoholic drinks and tobacco products. A media campaign on the risks of drinking will be rolled out towards the end of this year.

In a separate initiative, Health Minister Philippe Douste-Blazy announced his intention to put mandatory labels on bottles of alcoholic drinks warning women of the risks involved in drinking during pregnancy. This coincides with a case being put before the Lille public prosecutor who has opened a public enquiry to ascertain whether there is a lack of information in France on the risks involved in drinking during pregnancy.

Source :Journée Vinicole

## US Foetal Alcohol Syndrome Report

The National Organization on Foetal Alcohol Syndrome has published a report "Alcohol and Pregnancy Don't Mix" concluding that drinking among young women is on the rise, bringing with it a number of health consequences, including fetal alcohol syndrome.

The report found that binge drinking in women aged 18 to 44 increased in the United States by 13 percent between 1999 and 2002. Binge drinking, defined for the purposes of this report as having more than five drinks on one occasion, puts women at an increased risk for unintended pregnancies and means they are more likely to drink while pregnant.

NOFAS reported that each year 40,000 babies are born with foetal alcohol spectrum disorders, related to prenatal drinking (approx. one per 100 live births). Foetal alcohol spectrum disorders include a number of effects, including physical, mental, behavioral and/or learning disabilities.

With the release of the report, NOFAS called on Congress to devote more resources to combat alcohol-related birth defects. And members of Congress reciprocated by announcing the formation of the new Congressional Caucus on Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders.

## LAPD Gets \$125,000 Alcohol Crime Grant

The California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) awarded US\$125,000 to the Los Angeles Police Department to be used in fighting alcohol-related crime.

US\$25,000 of the grant funds will be used to target alcohol-related crime specifically in the Hollenbeck Division, to assist residents in the area to get rid of problem bars and liquor stores. The rest will go for city-wide enforcement of alcohol laws, a statement said.

ABC director Jolly said: "This is the ninth ABC grant totalling more than US\$900,000 given to the LAPD since 1996, with significant results. ... a total of 70 liquor outlets have been shut down for various reasons resulting in a positive

impact on the quality of life in the surrounding neighbourhoods."

Chief Bratton said the ABC grants have been a tremendous help in keeping in check the nearly 6,000 liquor outlets in the city. "The LAPD will continue to work with licensees to help them understand their responsibilities in the selling and serving of alcoholic beverages. The LAPD STAR Program, which stands for Standardized Training for Alcohol Retailers, will be expanded to educate licensees and their employees in promoting the responsible sale, service and distribution of alcoholic beverages within the City," he added.

The LAPD is one of 24 law enforcement agencies around the State to receive a portion of the US\$1.5m in ABC grants.

## Alcohol May Protect Women's Bones

Researchers at London's St Thomas Hospital examined the effect of alcohol on 46 pairs of identical twins, who drank either moderately or very little.

The moderate drinkers - who drank an average of eight alcohol units a week - had significantly denser bones than those who consumed very little. The research findings were published in *Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases*.

Researchers focused on the bone mineral density of subjects, as measured at the hip and spine. Chemical markers of the bone turnover were measured using urine samples.

The findings also support the results of previous studies which found that smoking causes thinner bones and osteoporosis. But the study failed to establish a clear link between bone production and alcohol intake.

It is hoped that the latest findings could be used to help develop new treatments for osteoporosis. It is unlikely that alcohol consumption will be prescribed to female patients, according to Professor Tim Spector of St Thomas' Hospital, London.

Prof Spector, who is based in the hospital's Twin Research and Genetic Epidemiology Unit, warned that excessive drinking is likely to have a negative effect on bone structure.

Prof Spector said: "Alcohol is like any other drug - it works differently at different levels and different people will also react differently to it...Further work to find out what in alcoholic drinks produces this effect could be useful."

Source: Williams FMK et al. The effect of moderate alcohol consumption on bone mineral density: a study of female twins. *Ann Rheum Dis* Published in the current online edition of the *Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases* (abstract at <http://ard.bmjournals.com/cgi/content/abstract/ard.2004.022269v1>)

## Healthy Lifestyle May Reduce Women's Risk of Developing Cancer

Post-menopausal women who follow recommended dietary and lifestyle guidelines may reduce their risk of developing and dying from cancer, with those in highest compliance experiencing the best outcomes.

Conversely, those women who followed one or none of the nine recommended guidelines for diet and lifestyle had a 35 percent higher risk of developing cancer and a 42 percent greater risk of dying from cancer than women who adhered to at least six of the recommendations considered for the study.

The study, published in the July issue of *Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers and Prevention*, examined data collected from 29,564 women, aged 55 to 69 upon entry into the study, who were followed over a 13-year period to determine the impact of dietary lifestyle factors on the incidence and death rate from cancer.

"Our study suggests that older women may be able to have a fairly large impact on their cancer risk by not smoking, controlling body weight, exercising and eating a healthy, balanced diet. Besides having an impact for individuals, following these recommendations would also have a large impact on reducing cancer in our communities as a whole" said James R. Cerhan, M.D., Ph.D.,

associate professor of epidemiology at the Mayo Clinic College of Medicine, Rochester, Minn.

Dr. Cerhan's team considered nine recommendations developed by the American Institute for Cancer Research, and evaluated women's cancer risk and other health outcomes based on how many of those categories the women followed as part of their normal lifestyle.

Those recommendations included having maximum body mass index less than 25 kg/m<sup>2</sup>; having gained no more than 11 pounds since age 18; engaging in daily moderate and weekly vigorous physical activity; eating of 5 or more servings of vegetables and fruit daily; consuming more than 400 grams (about 14 ounces) of complex carbohydrate per day; limiting alcohol intake to less than 14 grams per day (one drink); limiting red meat consumption to less than 80 grams per day (about 3 ounces); limiting daily consumption of fat to no more than 30 percent of total caloric intake; and limiting use of sodium to less than 2,400 milligrams per day.

Source: James Cerhan et al. Adherence To The AICR Cancer Prevention Recommendations And Subsequent Morbidity And Mortality In The Iowa Women's Health Study Cohort. *Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers and Prevention* 2004;13

## Pancreatitis Linked to Increased Alcohol Consumption

A recent UK study found that rates of acute pancreatitis (inflammation of the pancreas) have doubled over the past 30 years, particularly among younger age groups. Increasing alcohol consumption may be partly to blame, say the authors.

Acute pancreatitis is mainly caused by alcohol abuse and gall stones. It produces a sudden attack of severe upper abdominal pain, often accompanied by nausea and vomiting. An attack usually lasts for about 48 hours.

Researchers analysed trends in hospital admissions for pancreatitis from 1963 to 1998 in the Oxford region. Admission rates for acute pancreatitis rose in both men and women from 1963 to 1998, particularly among the younger age groups.

This partly reflects an increase in alcoholic pancreatitis, related to increasing use of alcohol in the community, suggest the authors, although an increase in the occurrence of gall stones may have also contributed to the rise.

Death rates in the first month after admission were 30 times higher than in the general population of the same age.

Overall, pancreatitis remains a disease with a poor prognosis. Death rates have not improved since the 1970s because no major innovations in treatment have been introduced, they conclude.

Source: Goldacre MJ et al. Hospital admission for acute pancreatitis in an English population, 1963-98: database study of incidence and mortality. *BMJ* 2004;328:1466-9.

## Light-to-Moderate Drinking Has Little Effect on Risk of Breast Cancer

In an effort to clarify the relationship between alcohol consumption and the risk of developing breast cancer, a new study has examined the influence of alcohol intake and type of beverage on breast cancer in relation to menopausal status. Findings support previous research showing that heavy drinking increases risk for breast cancer, predominantly among premenopausal women; however, this risk exists independent of alcohol type. Also that light-to-moderate drinking appears to have little effect on a woman's risk for breast cancer.

Morten Grønbaek, professor of alcohol research at the Centre for Alcohol Research at the National Institute of Public Health in Denmark stated that he and his colleagues chose to examine what effects the type of alcohol may play in cancer development due to some of their earlier research. "In quite a few previous studies, we have suggested that wine drinkers, in contrast to beer and spirits drinkers, seem to be at a lower risk for some cancers such as upper digestive tract cancer, lung cancer and colon cancer," he said. "There are several plausible biological mechanisms which may explain this, including the fact that

wine comprises flavonoids and resveratrol, which have been shown to have 'anti-carcinogenic' properties."

In addition, said Grønbaek, "the reason for looking at menopausal status is that it is very likely that development of breast cancer may have different etiologies depending on hormonal status, and this may be influenced by alcohol intake."

For this study, researchers used data gathered through the Copenhagen Centre for Prospective Population Studies, a six-cohort examination of health-related issues. The study population comprised 13,074 women, aged 20 to 91 years. Researchers used self-administered questionnaires to ask about alcohol intake, smoking habits, weight and height, physical activity in leisure time, children, use of hormone replacement therapy, menopausal status, and educational levels.

Analysis indicates that alcohol consumption of more than 27 drinks per week considered heavy drinking - increases the risk of breast cancer in premenopausal women, independent of alcohol type.

"Our study confirms earlier reports that heavy alcohol consumption is a risk for

breast cancer," said Grønbaek, "In this case, mainly among premenopausal women. The second main finding is that there seems to be no difference in the effect of the different types of alcohol, which indicates that it is ethanol itself and not the type of drink that is responsible for breast-cancer development."

R. Curtis Ellison, professor of medicine & public health and director of the Institute on Lifestyle & Health at Boston University School of Medicine said, "I believe this study demonstrates very well that light-to-moderate drinking of alcohol has very little effect on a woman's risk of breast cancer. These findings support the results of numerous other studies showing that an increase in breast-cancer risk, if present, is very slight. The study also has enough moderate drinkers of wine in it to be able to say that it does not support the protection against breast cancer from wine consumption."

Source: Petri AL et al. Alcohol Intake, Type of Beverage, and Risk of Breast Cancer in Pre- and Postmenopausal Women. *Alcoholism: Clinical & Experimental Research* 2004;28:1084-90.

## Smokers and Drinkers Show Gene Changes in Mouth Cells

Many healthy people who smoke or drink may have a genetic alteration in the cells of the mouth and throat that could signal an increased risk of developing cancer, according to researchers at the University of Hong Kong.

The genetic alteration affects the p15 gene, which is involved in the process that normally kills off cells when they go haywire. In many cancers, the p15 gene is methylated, meaning that it is turned off and is unable to perform its "tumor suppressor" function.

The researchers' study of healthy adults and patients with head and neck cancers found that 68 percent of healthy smokers and drinkers showed methylated p15 in some of their oral cells. The same was true of 48 percent of the cancer patients, but only 8 percent of healthy adults who

were non-smokers and drank only occasionally or not at all.

The investigators say it is unclear whether the healthy men and women who showed signs of p15 methylation are in fact at increased risk of developing head and neck cancer, a group of diseases that includes cancers of the mouth, nasal cavity and throat.

However, the findings do support the idea that "these p15 methylation changes are present in the very early stages of head and neck cancer development," study co-author Dr. Anthony Po-Wing Yuen told Reuters Health.

That smokers and drinkers face a risk of head and neck cancers is nothing new. Tobacco use is behind the majority of these cancers, and people who smoke and drink are at greater risk than those who do one or the other.

Identifying the "early genetic aberrations" that spur the cancer process may help doctors predict which smokers and drinkers are at particular risk of head and neck cancers, according to Yuen. What's more, he said, if scientists know which early genetic changes are at the root of cancer, they may be able to develop drugs that reverse these alterations.

However, the researcher stressed, cancer development is a complex process, and a range of factors, including any number of genetic aberrations, conspire to determine who develops cancers of the head and neck.

Source: Chang HW et al. Smoking and drinking can induce p15 methylation in the upper aerodigestive tract of healthy individuals and patients with head and neck squamous cell carcinoma. *Cancer* 2004;101:125-32.

## Study Identifies Genetics of Fat Metabolism, Red Wine Link

A new study has found that a gene called SIRT1 can reduce the development of new fat cells and increase the metabolism or use of fat within existing fat cells.

SIRT1 is the topic of considerable recent research. Studies have shown that its activity level can be significantly increased by the presence of resveratrol, a polyphenol and antioxidant found at high levels in grape skins.

The research carried out by scientists from Oregon State University, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the University of Ottawa, may help explain, why moderate consumption of red wine appears to reduce deaths from heart disease.

The study was done with mice as a research model, and a remaining challenge will be to see if the same results are observed in a higher vertebrate model, including humans.

The research outlined the processes of fat formation and usage at a cellular and genetic level, and analyzed the metabolic function of resveratrol.

“When cells were exposed to resveratrol, our studies showed a pretty dramatic reduction in the conversion to fat cells and a lesser but still significant increase in the mobilization of existing fat, or the rate at which the cells metabolized stored fat,” said Mark Leid, a professor of

pharmacology in the OSU College of Pharmacy. “This clearly could be one of the explanations for the health benefits that some researchers believe can be linked to moderate red wine consumption.”

A range of previous studies, have demonstrated that caloric restriction is one of the few proven methods to retard aging, improve cardiovascular health and extend mammalian lifespan.

Research done with yeast has shown that a gene called SIR2 tends to promote longevity, and that yeast cells die prematurely if this gene is deleted, Leid said. Previous studies have shown that resveratrol can increase the activity of SIR2 and increase the lifespan of yeast cells up to 70 percent.

And it has also been found that SIRT1, a gene found in both mice and humans, has essentially the same function as SIR2 and has the same reaction to stimulus by resveratrol.

In trying to determine the molecular basis for this genetic link to longevity, the new study found that SIRT1 increases the use of fat and reduces the formation of new fat cells - apparently it represses one or more fat-regulating proteins and other genes that drive fat storage following calorie restriction. This may have been

an evolutionary adaptation for the body to sense short term famine and counter it by increasing the burning of stored body fat, researchers say.

The increased activity of SIRT1 in the presence of resveratrol is clearly of interest, the researchers said, but it's too early to be certain of its effects in humans.

“It would be very premature to suggest that supplements of resveratrol would have any benefits, because this compound oxidizes very quickly and easily loses its metabolic effectiveness,” Leid said. “But we do know that red wine has fairly high levels of the compound, and this study would suggest at least one mechanism for possible health benefits of red wine. It may help prevent fat development and storage.”

Resveratrol is found in the skins of grapes, and its concentration in wine is a reflection of the time the skins are present during the fermentation process - because of that, the levels are much higher in red wine than in white wine or other products. Other sources of the compound include mulberries, peanuts, and some other plants.

Source: Picard F et al. Sirt1 promotes fat mobilization in white adipocytes by repressing PPAR-gamma. Nature 2004;429:771-6.

## Drinking and the Immune System

A research team in Karlsruhe, Germany have reported that daily consumption of alcohol, at a level known to afford protection against coronary heart disease, does not impair the body's immunological defences against viruses and other disease causing microbes.

Previous studies have already shown that heavy drinkers are much more likely than teetotalers to develop infection. This adverse effect is thought to be attributable to a damaging action of high levels of alcohol on the immune system. The Karlsruhe study set out to investigate some claims regarding the greater potency of red than white wine in safeguarding the body against viruses that cause colds. It was thought that perhaps some

substances such as the polyphenols in red wine protected drinkers immune system.

The results unambiguously demonstrated that neither red wine, nor pure alcohol diluted to the same concentration as wine, affected the efficiency of the the body's immune defences. Similarly neither dealcoholised red wine nor red grape juice, both of which are rich in polyphenols, affected the performance of the immune system.

Source: Daily Moderate Amounts of red Wine or Alcohol Have no effect on the immune system of healthy ment, European Journal of Clinical Nutrition (2004) 58, 40-45, Watzl B., Bub A., Pretzer G., Rosecer S., Barthh S.W., Rechkemmer G. Institute of Nutritional Physiology, Federal research Centre for Nutrition, Karlsruhe, Germany.

### Press Announcement AIM Gateway/ UAB Microsite



Following the awarding of the first major multi-disciplinary programmatic grant from the US Government's National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute to the The University of Alabama at Birmingham to study the effects of moderate consumption on cardiovascular health, AIM is pleased to announce that is has set up a direct link with Dr Francois M. Booyse ([booyse@uab.edu](mailto:booyse@uab.edu)) and Dale A. Parks ([dalep@uab.edu](mailto:dalep@uab.edu)) at UAB.

The site can be accessed through the dedicated section of the AIM Gateway to sensible drinking and health: ([www.aim-digest.com/gateway/index.htm](http://www.aim-digest.com/gateway/index.htm)).

## Antioxidants During Pregnancy May Help Prevent Birth Defects Tied to Alcohol

Pregnant women who abuse alcohol may reduce the risk of birth defects in their babies by taking antioxidants during pregnancy, a University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill study has found.

Dr. Kathleen K. Sulik, professor of cell and developmental biology at UNC's School of Medicine and Dr. Shao-yu Chen, a member of the Bowles Center for Alcohol Studies, assistant professor of cell and developmental biology, found a 36 percent reduction in limb malformations in the offspring of pregnant mice exposed to ethanol and at the same time given a newly developed antioxidant compound called EUK-134.

“What makes this study unique is that it shows for the first time that giving antioxidants to a pregnant mother at the same time she's exposed to alcohol can diminish the incidence of major malformations,” said Dr. Sulik.

Antioxidants protect key cellular components by neutralizing the damaging effects of free radicals, natural by products of cell metabolism. Free radicals form when oxygen is metabolized, or burned off, by the body.

They travel through cells, disrupting the structure of other molecules, causing cellular damage. Such cell damage is believed to contribute to aging and various health problems. Examples of antioxidants are selenium, vitamin C and E, zinc and superoxide dismutase (or SOD), a zinc- and copper- or manganese-containing enzyme that reacts with superoxide radicals to convert them to less dangerous chemical entities.

Sulik said a major focus of her research has been cellular mechanisms involved in birth defect formation, particularly those linked to ethanol exposure, such as fetal alcohol spectrum disorders, or FASD. Until now, much of this research at UNC and elsewhere has involved growing cells in the laboratory.

Chen and Sulik have extended their cell culture research to a whole embryo culture system. In this technique, early mouse embryos are grown in the laboratory and exposed to various levels of ethanol and antioxidants. Embryos are then monitored for evidence of cell death and abnormal development. “Using this method, we also showed that SOD can

diminish ethanol-induced cell death and subsequent malformations,” Chen said.

As to the new study, Sulik said, the implications apply directly to people with alcoholism: “the practical point of this paper is that perhaps we can diminish some of the problems that might exist if the nutritional status of alcoholic mothers improves. It would be great if these women would supplement their diets with a daily multivitamin....The idea of possibly adding antioxidants to alcoholic beverages has been proposed as a way of helping the situation”.

The amount of alcohol used in the study is high, Sulik added, equivalent to the amount that would raise the blood alcohol level of a person up to 0.4 or 0.5. This is a level that can be achieved by chronic alcoholics, people who have acquired a tolerance for alcohol. Virtually all children born with full-blown fetal alcohol syndrome, with major malformations caused by alcohol, are born to chronic alcoholics.

Source: The study appears on-line in FASEB-J, the journal of the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology

## Alcohol Consumption and the Metabolic Syndrome

The metabolic syndrome (MS) is associated with a high risk of cardiovascular disease morbidity and mortality. Light and moderate alcohol consumption have been associated with reduced cardiovascular disease morbidity and mortality. This study examined the association between alcohol consumption and MS, evaluating data from 7,962 Korean adults (3,597 men, 4,365 women) who had participated in the 1998 Korean National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey.

Results showed that the prevalence of MS was 20.8% in men and 26.9% in women. The adjusted odds ratio for MS in the group consuming 1–14.9 g alcohol/d was 0.71 (95% CI: 0.53, 0.95) in men and 0.80 (95% CI: 0.65, 0.98) in women. Alcohol consumption had a significant inverse relation with the odds ratio for low HDL cholesterol in all alcohol groups. In comparison with light drinking, heavy alcohol consumption

(>30 g/d) was associated with significantly higher odds ratios for high blood pressure and high triacylglycerol in men and high fasting blood glucose and high triacylglycerol in women. Odds ratios for MS and its components tended to increase with increasing alcohol consumption.

The authors conclude that although alcohol consumption had a significant inverse relation with the odds ratio for low HDL cholesterol in all alcohol groups, an increasing dose-response relation was found between alcohol consumption and the odds ratio for MS. This might be due to the opposite relation of alcohol consumption to other components of the metabolic syndrome.

Yoon YS, Oh SW, Baik HW, Park HS, Kim WY. Alcohol consumption and the metabolic syndrome in Korean adults: the 1998 Korean National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey. *Am J Clin Nutr* 2004;80:217–224.

## Russia May Privatise Alcohol Concern

The Russian state is looking to privatise its alcohol empire next year, according to press reports in the country. At a government meeting Agriculture Minister Alexei Gordeev proposed inclusion of Rosspirtprom into the privatisation plan. Economic Development and Trade Minister German Gref was quoted saying: “If the Agriculture Ministry presents the necessary documents in two weeks, Rosspirtprom will be sold in 2005.”

Rosspirtprom was established in 2000 to manage state assets in the alcohol industry. State-owned stakes in 105 distilleries were concentrated in Rosspirtprom, with the holding concentrated in about 40% of vodka and about 60% of alcohol production facilities of Russia. Pavel Shapkin, chair of the National Alcohol Association, estimates the value of Rosspirtprom to be around US\$10bln.



## Copper in Wines: Neglected Effects?

G.J.Troup<sup>a</sup>, D.R.Hutton<sup>a</sup>, S.J. Longford<sup>b</sup>, I.Cheah<sup>b</sup>, and Kathy Macfarlane<sup>b</sup>. <sup>a</sup>School of physics and Materials Engineering, and <sup>b</sup>School of Chemistry, Monash University, Clayton 3800, Victoria, Australia.

**Abstract**

Copper (Cu) occurs certainly in some, maybe in all wines, because of its presence in the soil. Evidence from Electron Paramagnetic Resonance (EPR) is given showing that Cu may 'hide' in wines as Cu<sup>+</sup>, clearly an antioxidant. Cu is also necessary for the physiology of the human body.

**Introduction**

Copper occurs in many, if not all soils. Modern extensive use of Cu in the wine industry commenced in Europe in the 1880s for fungus control [1]: this practice would have spread to other winemaking countries, so vineyard soils low in Cu would have had their concentrations increased.

EPR is a useful and sensitive tool for observing Cu<sup>++</sup>: Cu<sup>+</sup> is unobservable, not being paramagnetic. Cu<sup>++</sup> is usually observable at room temperature, or at least at the temperatures simply obtained by using liquid N<sub>2</sub>. In the experimental work to be described, measurements were made at room temperature for solids, and at temperatures below 0 C for frozen solutions: for the latter case, cooled dry N<sub>2</sub> was used. A Varian E-line X-band (~ 9.1 GHz.) EPR spectrometer was the measuring apparatus.

**Experimental Results**

During the measurement of the free radical concentration in the red wine fractions anthocyanins, flavonoids and non- flavonoids [2], a Cu<sup>++</sup> signal was observed in the flavonoid fraction, but not in the others; nor was it observed in the complete wine from which the fractions were obtained. The Cu<sup>++</sup> presence was put down to the change of pH required to

obtain the flavonoid fraction separation. During neither the fractionation nor the

EPR experiment was contamination by Cu possible.

Some South Australian red wines throw a red waxy bottle deposit shown to be an anthocyanin protein compound [3]. Samples of the deposit, when examined by EPR, showed a strong Cu<sup>++</sup> signal with N superhyperfine structure (from the protein) as well as the free radical signal expected to be associated with the anthocyanins [4]. Again no contamination by Cu was possible.

Cu is commonly used in recipes for 'model wines' [5,6]. In a series of experiments to observe the effect of Vitamin C on the ageing of a model wine, the samples were artificially aged by being kept at 40 C. for three months. From the now brown mother liquor, a fluffy brownish precipitate was formed. When examined as a solid, it gave a Cu<sup>++</sup> spectrum and free radical signal as might be expected.

This result encouraged us to examine a similar precipitate formed from a natural Chardonnay wine produced by the Australian Wine Research Institute and artificially aged as above. The full wine gave no Cu<sup>++</sup> signal but the precipitate did, as well as a free radical signal: the Cu<sup>++</sup> signal had neither hyperfine nor superhyperfine structure [7]. No Cu contamination was possible.

While measuring the change of phenolic concentration in free dried red grapeseed with maturation, by using EPR [8] we found a Cu<sup>++</sup> signal in the phenolic extract made with 2:1 acetone water for 24h. This signal was observed at 77 K and contained N superhyperfine structure, but had disappeared at room temperature, presumably because of the lines being broadened as the temperature

rose. Again no Cu contamination was possible.

**Discussion.**

These experimental results, initially quite unexpected (especially for the red wine waxy bottle deposit), indicate the presence of Cu in the wines studied, most probably in the form of Cu<sup>+</sup>. As Cu<sup>+</sup> is oxidisable, it is clearly an antioxidant and should be taken into account in considering the antioxidant action of red wine in particular. It is interesting that Cu is often found closely associated with phenolics: in the commercially available red clover extracts Promensil and Trinovin, which contain polyphenols that mimic oestrogens, Cu<sup>++</sup> signals with N superhyperfine structure were found [9].

But there is more.....

"Copper has been recognised as an essential trace metal for living organisms since the late 1930s. Its role as a cofactor for crucial enzymes has been well established. These include cytochrome c oxidase (the terminal enzyme in electron transport and respiration), Cu/Zn superoxide dismutase (SOD 1) and ceruloplasmin (which deal with superoxide and other potentially damaging radicals).....The chemistry of copper makes it an ideal participant in redox reactions, as it easily cycles between the cuprous and cupric states." [10].

It should be pointed out that there is a special 'chaperone protein', simply called the chaperone protein for SOD1, (CCS), which keeps SOD1 supplied with Cu! SOD is a great disabler of the superoxide radical, O<sup>2-</sup>, which is extremely active because of its charge as well as the free radical.

Cu is also part of the normal prion protein, which is an extracellular membrane component of neuronal cells. Abnormal prion lacking Cu is thought to be involved in some psychiatric disorders in humans, and in 'mad cow disease'.

So, while enjoying the benefits of the phenolics in wines, we should perhaps occasionally remember that their companion copper is chaperoning us against the possible bad effects of the superoxide radical!

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**AIM – Alcohol in Moderation was founded in 1991 as an independent organisation whose role is to communicate ‘The Sensible Drinking Message’ and to act as a conduit for information from the industry, associations and relevant medical and scientific research, legislation, policy and campaigns.**

#### **AIM Mission Statement**

- To promote the sensible and responsible consumption of alcohol,
- To encourage informed debate on alcohol issues,
- To communicate and publicise relevant medical and scientific research in a clear and concise format via AIM Digest and the AIM Research Highlights,
- To publish information via the ‘AIM Gateway to Sensible Drinking and Health’ website containing a unique archive of research on moderate drinking and health – comprehensively indexed and fully searchable,
- To publish information to the consumer on sensible drinking and health via the ‘Drinking and You’ website based on national government guidelines with sections for the UK, USA, Canada, Spain, France Sweden and Germany,
- To distribute AIM Digest without charge to the media, legislators and researchers involved in alcohol affairs,
- To direct enquiries from the media and others towards full and accurate sources of information.

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## Wine and Weighty Matters- Using Wine to Lose Weight or Gain Weight?

By Harvey E. Finkel, M.D.

Fashion (even fad) and health are the motivations ruling attempts at weight control. I fear that fashion is usually more effective than the desire for good health. Just watch television commercials for the huge industry of weight-loss programs. Fashions change. These days, anorexic models are the standards for adolescent girls who want to look like zombies too—frightening. But visit your art museum to see how Rubens, for example, a supreme artist of another age, depicts a previous fleshy ideal of beauty.

Abnormalities of weight, only recently being recognized as illnesses, not just passing cosmetic deviations, are exceedingly difficult to correct and may be part of a complex of disorders. Obesity leads to considerably increased susceptibility to cardiovascular disease (heart attack, stroke, and the like), to diabetes, with all of its dire complications, to wearing down of bones and joints, and on and on. Anorexia is likewise dangerous: witness the tragically premature death of the young, talented, and successful singer Karen Carpenter a few years ago.

Weight gain, especially, and loss continue to be mysteries that science has only begun to understand. To make matters worse for us, bad information abounds. Wine is often characterized as a cause of corpulence, a kiss of death these days for any consumable—not so. Drinking, even moderately, has been accused of causing wasting—not so too. Let's see just how wine may tend to influence weight, as far as we know thus far.

First, we should review the nutritional makeup of wine. Is it really loaded with calories, with carbohydrates? Is wine a source of vitamins, minerals, other good stuff? No, in both cases. Dry wine provides few calories, about 80 per four-ounce glass, virtually all from its twelve percent alcohol. (Such wine contains about 2.8 grams of alcohol per ounce. Each gram yields seven calories.) Sweet wine and those with more alcohol provide more calories, but not as many as one might fear. Worst case: Port, with 20 percent alcohol and 10 percent residual sugar, would sock us with 178

calories per four-ounce glass, still far less than the rich dessert you were eager to order. As always, moderation rules.

Dry wine contains virtually no carbohydrates (sugars, starches), so is safe for diabetics as long as they eat when drinking (else they may risk dangerous plummeting of blood sugar). Freedom from “carbs” is all the rage now among weight-loss dieters, who must number in the millions. Wine contains no appreciable protein, nor fat. It is a source of only negligible quantities of vitamins and minerals: don't rely on wine as a nutritional supplement. (Abusers who drink all their calories are doubly endangered, from the alcohol load and from malnutrition.) For those who must restrict their intake of, say, sodium, wine is no threat.

So what is wine? A typical dry wine is 86 or 87 percent water and 12 percent ethyl alcohol (ethanol). Much of the rest is composed of those intriguing polyphenolic antioxidants that color, flavor, and preserve wine, and, along with alcohol, may so enhance health and lengthen life, esters and acids important to smell and taste, and many trace materials. Alcohol is the only component that is harmful if taken in excess, other than in extremely rare cases of specific allergies.

The relationship of drinking to weight seem even more complex and murky than the values and liabilities of various diets. We are well advised to stick to what's been established by research.

Men and women differ in how they handle calories, especially the calories of alcohol. Men preferentially deposit excess calories as fat on their bellies. Equal calories of wine are less likely than those of beer to give one a “beer belly.” I don't know why. This is, of course, old news. Women are more likely to pad their posteriors. The difference may be more than cosmetic, for a fat belly has been shown to be a coronary risk factor—also old news.

The weight wiles of women go further. They, more than men, especially when

drinking immoderately or compressing their intakes in a short time, are often able to hide calories: they gain less weight than would be calculated for the number of calories consumed. Some observations have suggested that alcohol may have a weight-lowering effect, particularly on women. “The case of the missing calories” remains a mystery. Perhaps alcohol promotes some sort of energy wastage or impairs some metabolic process. Alcohol does not tend to make lean people obese, but it may cause the obese to become more so. Part of the mystery likely reflects contrasting individual differences in handling alcohol.

In general, moderate wine consumption does not lead to weight gain or undesirable changes in body chemistry. On the happy contrary, moderate drinking usually helps correct weight excess and reduce the risks of diabetes and cardiovascular disease by several means. With heavy drinking, particularly when accompanied by a high fat intake, satiety may be difficult to reach, so excessive caloric intake may lead to excessive weight gain in the unfulfilled pursuit of satisfaction. A five-year study from London of 7,608 middle-aged men (Wannamethee SG, Shaper AG: *Am J Clin Nutr* 2003; 77:1312-1317) reports that consumption of one to three drinks per day did not lead to alcohol-related weight gain. More than three drinks per day, however, “contributes directly to weight gain and obesity, irrespective of the type of alcohol consumed.” Spirit drinkers tended to be heavier than wine and beer drinkers.

As a doctor, I have personally witnessed impressive desired weight loss resulting from dietary restraint enabled by the satisfaction of a modicum of good wine. Seemingly paradoxical is the confirmed observation that elderly people suffering loss of appetite eat with gusto after being given wine. (Their overall health and spirits also improve.) Anorexia in young women may respond in part to small doses of wine. While we have no definitive explanation for the apparently opposing actions of wine, some of what it does is likely influenced by the

condition and metabolic idiosyncrasies of who is drinking and by alcohol's relaxation of emotional tension and depression. This should also raise a caution against the risk of falling into dependency.

Reports of weight-loss programs for the severely obese are pleasant surprises. Those patients drinking between seven and 36 ounces of wine per week lost significantly more weight than those who did not drink or who consumed negligible quantities. Those who drank more than 36 ounces did even better (but that is a borderline or higher quantity than moderate drinking for women). All the wine drinkers sustained additional health benefits during the duration of the study (Dixon JB, Dixon ME, O'Brien PE: *Obes Res* 2002; 10:245-252). Is this

an example of the mysterious wasting of alcohol-associated calories?

Liver disease, ultimately progressing to cirrhosis, is the major fatal medical complication of long-term alcohol abuse. An intermediate stage of liver disease has been observed in heavy drinkers before the progression to cirrhosis and in obese humans who do not drink to excess. Research from Baltimore (Cope K, Risby T, Diehl AM: *Gastroenterology* 2000; 119:1340-1347) in obese mice may have given us an explanation and a warning. These abstentious mice suffer from liver disease that appears identical to that cited above, the result of alcohol produced by bacteria lolling about in the mice's guts rendered lazy by obesity. Normally motile intestines are able to propel bacteria to a

more innocent fate. Alcohol and weight excess may, therefore, be dangerous companions in some individuals.

The weight of evidence supports moderate drinking as beneficial to the obese, providing the same health benefits others derive, plus possibly easing weight loss. I would be wary of more than moderate quantities for a prolonged period. Those truly needing to put on weight may also find help in moderate drinking. As always, individual medical advice should be sought, but if you're blaming the wine instead of the whipped cream, it's time to recalculate your bottom line!

*Harvey Finkel, M.D is clinical professor at Boston University Medical Center and a valued member of the AIM Council*

## Sweden: Surrounded by Cheap Alcohol The Swedes Have To Follow Their Neighbours

by Christopher Jarnvall

For years there has been a pressure on Swedish alcohol taxes from abroad: Cheap beer, wine and spirit have regularly been imported by almost every Swede returning home from Germany tin the last two years the limits for import step by step have become more generous and today there are in practice no limits at all for private import. However, so to speak, Finland that took the first step towards decreased taxes in order to keep the market within the country.

Cheap vodka from Estonia had a certain impact on Finnish prices. Half a year ago Finland reduced the taxes on alcohol, and the tax on spirits was reduced most of all. Sweden realized that a reduction was badly needed even here in order not to lose even more of the market to products from Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia – not to mention Finland. But first of all Denmark and the low prices in Germany are the reasons why we will now see a change in Swedish policy.

In the middle of August The Alcohol Imports Committee presented its first

proposal: A reduction of the spirits tax by 40 percent as of 1 January 2005. The Committee naturally presented a handful of other proposals regarding social and legal aspects as well, but it is the spirits tax that is controversial.

First of all many Swedes – even politicians of the Government party and their supporters – are surprised that there is only a suggestion to reduce the spirits tax, not the tax of beer and wine, which would have been more in line with the social program to turn Swedes from strong drinks to beer and wine.

In volume the cross border shopping of beer is the biggest of alcoholic drinks, representing well over 100 million litres 2003. Even shopping of wine amounts to huge quantities, about 30-40 million litres. Shopping of spirits is lower in volume but represents more than 50 percent of the total consumption of spirits, which is the highest share. However, the plan is: If less people will go abroad buying spirits, even the imports of beer and wine will be reduced.

But, there is a chance the proposal to the Parliament will contain a reduction of beer and wine if Denmark proceeds to meet the German levels.

Now the Government is dealing with their supporters of the Green Party and the Communists and it is not certain that the controversial reduction will go through the Parliament, at least not supported by the Greens and the Communists. In fact, many MP's from the Social Democrats are against, but the whip is normally working. The Government would get support, at least from the Liberals and the Conservatives, but this is not their first choice, since they have to Govern together with the leftists.

Let's not take anything for granted in this controversial question.

*Christopher Jarnvall is Editor of Alcohol Update in Sweden and is a valued member of the AIM Council*

## Moderate Wine Drinkers have Lower Hypertension-related Mortality

A new study by Serge Reynaud et al, has found that for a given blood pressure, the risk of death from coronary artery disease is much higher in northern Europe and the United States than in Mediterranean countries. In a prospective cohort study, the authors tested the hypothesis that regular wine drinking reduces the hypertension-related risk of death, using data from 36,583 healthy middle-aged men who had normal results on an electrocardiogram and were not taking drugs for cardiovascular disease risk factors. The subjects underwent a comprehensive health appraisal at the Center for Preventive Medicine between 1978 and 1985. Mortality from all causes and from cardiovascular disease during a 13-21 year follow up was recorded.

Moderate “wine drinkers” (those who consumed <60 g/d of alcohol and no beer) in quartiles of systolic blood pressure averaging 116, 129, 139, and 158 mmHg, had lower risks of death from all causes by 37%, 2%, 27%, and 23%, respectively, than did abstainers; all differences except for the second quartile were statistically significant. No significant reduction in all-cause mortality in relation to SBP was observed in other drinkers (those who consumed both beer and wine or those consuming

360 g alcohol/d from wine). The authors conclude that a moderate intake of wine is associated with a lower risk of mortality from all causes in persons with hypertension.

The study found that moderate wine drinkers (<60 g/d, or less than approx. 5 drinks/day) had higher blood pressure than abstainers but that their risk of all-cause mortality was lower than that of abstainers.

Although the investigators did not adjust for total alcohol in their analyses, the total amounts of alcohol were similar in the different groups (31 and 41 g/d for wine drinkers and other drinkers, respectively, in the lower consumption groups; 103 and 105 g/d, respectively, in the higher consumption groups), so this is probably not important.

The greatest lowering of risk (37%) was among subjects in the lowest quartile of blood pressure, but still there was a significant lowering of risk (RR=0.77, 95% CI = 0.62, 0.96) for those in the highest blood pressure group, which had an average systolic pressure of 158 mmHg, in comparison with abstainers. For these subjects in the highest quartile of blood pressure, the relative risk of death for heavier consumers of wine (60

g/d or more) was 1.26 (95% CI = 1.01, 1.57); for other consumers (wine plus beer) of <60 g/d it was 1.14 (95% CI = 0.89, 1.47), and for other consumers of 60 g/d or more of alcohol it was 1.34 (95% CI = 1.07, 1.67). The authors also report in the text similar effects for cardiovascular mortality, with overall a lower relative risk, in comparison with abstainers, only for moderate wine consumers (RR=0.76, 95% CI=0.59, 0.97).

This study suggests that even though the alcohol in wine may lead to increases in blood pressure, some of its polyphenols or other non-alcoholic components may help protect against all-cause and cardiovascular mortality. Such potential protection is lost when the consumption is higher with greater than 60 g/d of alcohol in the form of any beverage being associated with a significantly higher risk of total mortality.

Source: Renaud SC, Guéguen R, Conard P, Lanzmann-Petithory D, Orgogozo J-M, Henry O. Moderate wine drinkers have lower hypertension-related mortality: a prospective cohort study in French men. *Am J Clin Nutr* 2004;80:621-625.

## Spinning the Bottle Review by Harvey Posert and Paul Franson

Reviewed by Peter Duff



In reviewing this book, I want to pay a compliment to Harvey Posert with whom I have worked for the last thirty years. Nobody understands the tricks of the ‘PR’ game more than he does. This fascinating collection of case histories and the ‘wheeler dealing’ of the public relations which he aptly calls ‘spinning the boottle’ reveals some of the mysteries of P.R.

We were involved in the creation of Robert Mondavi’s Mission Programme

that Harvey mentions in the introduction, and from which the original European conferences on ‘Sensible Drinking and Health’ sprang, leading in 1991 to the formation of AIM. In fact Harvey was in Strasbourg after the European Parliament debate, when AIM was born.

So it is with affection that I recommend this book of articles, stories and anecdotes about public relations and wine. For information on obtaining a copy visit [www.spinningthebottle.com](http://www.spinningthebottle.com)

## UNITED KINGDOM

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### Health Education Authority

Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, London WC1 9TX  
Tel: (020) 72985656 Fax: (020) 77259031  
email: [enquiries@hpe.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@hpe.org.uk)  
website: [www.hpe.org.uk](http://www.hpe.org.uk) and [www.wrecked.co.uk](http://www.wrecked.co.uk)

### The Medical Council on Alcoholism

3 St. Andrew's Place, London, NW1 4LB  
Tel: (0207) 487 4445 Fax: (0207) 9354479

### The Portman Group

7-10 Chandos Street, Cavendish Square, London W1G 9DQ  
Tel: 020 7907 3700 Fax: 020 7907 3710  
website: [www.portman-group.org.uk](http://www.portman-group.org.uk)

### Alcohol Focus Scotland

2nd Floor 166 Buchanan Street, Glasgow G1 2NH  
Tel: 0141-572 6700 Fax: 041-333 1606

### British Beer and Pub Association

Market Towers, 1, Nine Elms Lane, London, SW8 5NQ  
Tel: 020 7627 9191 Fax: 020 7627 9123  
email: [jwitheridge@beerandpub.com](mailto:jwitheridge@beerandpub.com)  
website [www.beerandpub.com](http://www.beerandpub.com)

### The Wine & Spirit Association

Five Kings House, 1 Queen Street Place,  
London EC4R 1XX Tel: 020 7248 5377  
Fax: 020 7489 0322 e-mail: [wsa@wsa.org.uk](mailto:wsa@wsa.org.uk)  
Website: [www.wsa.org.uk](http://www.wsa.org.uk)

### Brewers of Europe

Rue Caroly 23-25, B-1060 Bruxelles Tel: (+32.2) 672  
23 92 Fax: (+32.2) 660 94 02  
email: [info@brewersofeurope.org](mailto:info@brewersofeurope.org)  
website: [www.brewersofeurope.org](http://www.brewersofeurope.org)

### Forum of Taste and Education

Livornostraat 13 b 5 rue de Livourne – Brussel 1050  
Bruxelles, Belgium  
Tel: 32 2 539 36 64 Fax: 32 2 537 81 56  
email: [forum.taste.education@skynet.be](mailto:forum.taste.education@skynet.be)  
website [www.forum-taste-education.com](http://www.forum-taste-education.com)

### Enterprise et Prevention

13, Rue Monsigny, 75002 Paris, France  
Tel: 00-33-53-43-80-75  
email: [enterprise@wanadoo.fr](mailto:enterprise@wanadoo.fr)  
website: [www.soifdevivre.com](http://www.soifdevivre.com)

### IREB

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### OIV

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email: [oiv@oiv.int](mailto:oiv@oiv.int) website: [www.oiv.int](http://www.oiv.int)

### STIVA

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email: [Hanneke.Heeres@STIVA.nl](mailto:Hanneke.Heeres@STIVA.nl)  
website: [www.stiva.nl](http://www.stiva.nl)

### Fundacion AlcoholY Sociedad

Diego de Leon 44,2 ES 28006 Madrid  
Tel: + 34 91 745 08 44 Fax: + 34 91 561 8955  
website: [www.alcoholysociedad.org](http://www.alcoholysociedad.org)

### Scandanavian Medical Alcohol Board

Vandværksvej 11 DK - 5690 Tommerup  
Tel: 45 64 75 22 84 Fax: 45 64 75 28 44  
email: [smab@org](mailto:smab@org)  
website: [www.smab.org](http://www.smab.org)

## EUROPE

### Deutsche Wein Akademie GMBH

Gutenbergplatz 3-5, 55116 Mainz  
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49-6131-282948 (headd office) Fax: 49-2641-203667  
email: [fradera@deutscheweinakademie.de](mailto:fradera@deutscheweinakademie.de)  
website: [www.deutscheweinakademie.de](http://www.deutscheweinakademie.de)

### FIVIN

Plaza Penedés, 3, 3,08720 Vilafranca del Penedés,  
Barcelona, Spain  
Tel: 0034 (93) 890 45 45  
Fax: 0034 (93) 890 46 11

### GODA

Gode Alkoholdninger, Kattesundet 9, DK-1458  
Kobenhavn K, Denmark Tel: 33 13 93 83 Fax: 33 13 03  
84 email: [info@goda.dk](mailto:info@goda.dk)  
website: [www.goda.dk](http://www.goda.dk)

### FIVS International Federation of Wines & Spirits

18, rue d'Aguesseau, F-75008 - PARIS France  
Tél. 33 01 42 68 82 48 Fax 33 01 40 06 06 98  
email: [fivs.ass@wanadoo.fr](mailto:fivs.ass@wanadoo.fr)  
website: [www.fivs.org](http://www.fivs.org)

### The Amsterdam Group

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B-1050 Brussels Belgium  
Tel: +32 2 401 61 35 Fax: + 32 2 401 68 68  
email: [info@amsterdamgroup.org](mailto:info@amsterdamgroup.org)  
website [www.amsterdamgroup.org](http://www.amsterdamgroup.org)

### MEAS Limited

Merrion House  
1/3 Fitzwilliam Street Lower  
Dublin 2, Ireland  
Tel: 00 353 1 611 4811 Fax: 00 353 1 611 4808  
website [www.meas.ie](http://www.meas.ie)

### The European Federation Of Wine & Spirit Importers And Distributors (EFWSID)

Five Kings House  
1 Queen Street Place  
London EC4R 1XX  
Tel +44 (0) 20 7248 5377 Fax +44(0) 20 7489 0322  
email: [EFWSID@wsa.org.uk](mailto:EFWSID@wsa.org.uk)

## USA, CANADA, SOUTH AMERICA, AUSTRALIA

### Wine America

1200 G Street NW, Suite 360, Washington DC 20005  
Tel: (800) 879 4637 Fax: (202) 347 6341  
email: [info@americanwineries.org](mailto:info@americanwineries.org)  
website: [www.americanwineries.org](http://www.americanwineries.org)

### American Wine Alliance For Research And Education

website: [www.alcohol-AWARE.com](http://www.alcohol-AWARE.com)

### American Council On Science And Health

1995 Broadway, 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10023-5860  
Tel: (212) 362-7044 Ext. 234 Fax: (212) 362-4919  
email: [kava@acsh.org](mailto:kava@acsh.org) website: [www.acsh.org](http://www.acsh.org)

### Beer Institute

122 C Street, NW #750,  
Washington DC 20001  
Tel: (202) 737-2337 Fax: (202) 737-7004  
email: [info@beerinstitute.org](mailto:info@beerinstitute.org)  
website: [www.beerinstitute.org](http://www.beerinstitute.org)

### Distilled Spirits Council Of The US

1250 Eye Street, NW, Suite 400,  
Washington DC 20005  
Tel: (202) 628-3544  
website: [www.discus.org](http://www.discus.org)

### Proyecto Ciencia Vino Y Salud

Facultad de ciencias Biológicas,  
Casilla 114 D. Santiago, Chile  
Tel: /Fax: (56-23) 222 2577  
email: [vinsalud@genes.bio.puc.cl](mailto:vinsalud@genes.bio.puc.cl)

### Educ' Alcool

606, Cathcart, Suite 700, Montréal, Québec, H3B 1K9  
Canada Tel: (514) 875-7454  
email: [hsacy@educalcoool.qc.ca](mailto:hsacy@educalcoool.qc.ca) website:  
[www.educalcoool.qc.ca](http://www.educalcoool.qc.ca)

### The American Beverage Institute

1775 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 1200  
Washington, D.C. 20006 Tel: 202.463.7110  
website: [www.americanbeverageinstitute.com](http://www.americanbeverageinstitute.com)

### FISAC

(Fundacion de Investigaciones Sociales A.C.)  
Francisco Sosa 230. coyoacan CP 04000 Mexico DF -  
Mexico

### The Wine Institute

425 Market Street, Suite 1000, San Francisco, CA  
94105, USA Tel: (415) 512-0151 Fax: (415) 442-0742

### The Beer Wine And Spirits Council Of New Zealand

level 4, 70 The Terrace, Wellington, PO Box 5384  
Tel: +64-4-472 2959  
email: [bwsc@zra.co.nz](mailto:bwsc@zra.co.nz)  
website: [www.beerwsc.co.nz](http://www.beerwsc.co.nz)

### Traffic Injury Research Foundation.

Suite 200, 171 Nepean Street, Ottawa, Ontario,  
Canada, K2P 0B4 Tel: 613-238-5235  
email: [barbarak@trafficingjuryresearch.com](mailto:barbarak@trafficingjuryresearch.com)  
website: [www.trafficingjuryresearch.com](http://www.trafficingjuryresearch.com)

### ICAP

International Center for Alcohol Policies  
1519 New Hampshire Avenue, NW  
Washington DC 20036  
Tel: (202) 986-1159 Fax: (202) 986-2080  
website: [www.icap.org](http://www.icap.org)

### The Century Council

1310 G Street, NW, Suite 600,  
Washington, DC 20005-3000  
Tel: (202) 637-0077 Fax: (202) 637-0079  
email: [washde@centurycouncil.org](mailto:washde@centurycouncil.org)  
website: [www.centurycouncil.org](http://www.centurycouncil.org)

### California Association Of Winegrape Growers

601 University Avenue, Suite 135 Sacramento, CA  
95825 email: [karen@cwag.org](mailto:karen@cwag.org)  
website: [www.cwag.org](http://www.cwag.org)

### Lodi-Woodridge Winegrape Commission

2545 West Turner Road Lodi, CA 95242 USA  
email: [mark@lodiwine.com](mailto:mark@lodiwine.com)  
website [www.lodiwine.com](http://www.lodiwine.com)

### Olsways Preseervation & Exchange Trust

266 Beacon Street Boston, MA 02116 617.421.5500  
Fax: 617.421.5511 website: [www.oldwayspt.org](http://www.oldwayspt.org)

### The Australian Wine Research Institute

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website [www.awri.com](http://www.awri.com)