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Beer is not that bad after all: helps with vascular diseases and is good for re-hydration

Moderate drinking of ale and lager can cut the risk of diabetes and high blood pressure and even help people lose weight, doctors say.



Moderate beer consumption is associated with nutritional and health benefits according to Spanish doctors

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The Spanish researchers suggest combining beer with exercise and a healthy Mediterranean diet high in fish, fruit and vegetables and olive oil. Likewise drinking beer to re-hydrate following intense physical exercise is “as good as drinking water” showed another paper.

Beer contains folic acid, vitamins, iron and calcium and has the same health benefits already attributed to moderate wine drinking, researchers found. And they blamed fatty foods like chips, a lack of exercise and binge drinking for beer bellies in Britain.

Dr Ramon Estruch, the lead researcher, said: “Moderate beer consumption is associated with nutritional and health benefits. It does not necessarily mean weight gain since it has no fat and calorie content is low.”

He contrasted the culture of drinking small glasses of beer with tapas in Spain to binge drinking in Britain.

He said: “Beer drinkers here do not resemble Britons, who drink large quantities, almost without moving from one spot, while eating chips and sausages”

The joint study was carried out by Barcelona University, the Hospital Clinic in Barcelona and the Carlos III Institute of Health in Madrid.

Dr Estruch and Dr Rosa Lamuela tested 1,249 men and women over 57 years old.

They found that those who regularly drank moderate amounts of beer were less likely to suffer from diabetes and high blood pressure and had a lower body fat content.

Those with a Mediterranean diet who drank up to a pint of beer a day “not only did not put on weight, but in some cases even lost weight” -

Beer provides a 'protective' effect on the cardiovascular system and has relatively low alcohol content compared

to other drinks, they concluded.

Likewise another scientific paper indicates that the consumption of beer following the practice of sport is as effective as water in the re-hydration process.

This was one of the conclusions at the “VI Symposium on beer and health” held in Brussels and which convened EU medicine and nutrition experts.

The paper is based on a field work by Dr. Manuel Castillo from the University of Granada who presented the results of tests on groups of young players, and consisted basically in measuring their body reactions to drinking water or beer following exhausting physical exercises.

“We undertook the experiment to prove if the extended custom of having a few beers following matches of demanding physical exercises was positive or not”, said Dr, Castillo, and the conclusion was that “two 600 cc bottles do not represent any problem in the re-hydration process after exercise”.

“Beer in this case would be exactly the same as drinking water” added Castillo.

“We did not find any specific or negative effect that could be attributed to drinking water compared with a similar condition for water”.

However he did point out that those people who have problems with fermented beverage should keep to medical recommendations.

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