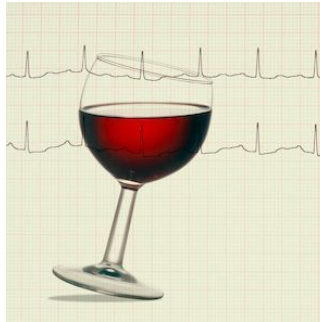

Increase in Stroke Risk With Greater Alcohol Intake



Consumption of alcohol is associated with an increased risk of incident atrial fibrillation. Even a low spectrum of alcohol consumption could be a risk factor for atrial fibrillation. Alcohol consumption has been shown to have a consistent linear dose-response relationship when it comes to risk of AF.

In a recent study, alcohol abstinence reduced the recurrence of atrial fibrillation in patients with paroxysmal or persistent atrial fibrillation. In patients with moderate to heavy drinking, alcohol abstinence resulted in a significant reduction in the recurrence of atrial fibrillation and burden compared to patients who continued their alcohol consumption. However, there was no report of a reduction of stroke in these findings.

In this study, researchers wanted to determine an association between alcohol consumption status after newly diagnosed atrial fibrillation and the risk of ischaemic stroke. The primary outcome of the study was the incidence of ischaemic stroke during follow-up. Patients were followed up from the start date until the occurrence of ischaemic stroke, death or end of the study period, whichever came first.

Data of 97,869 patients with newly diagnosed atrial fibrillation were analysed. Patients were divided into three groups according to the status of their alcohol consumption before and after the diagnosis of atrial fibrillation. These three groups included nondrinkers, abstainers from alcohol after diagnosis of atrial fibrillation and current drinkers. Of the 97,869 patients, 51% were nondrinkers, 13% were abstainers, and 36% were current drinkers.

Overall, findings show that even a mild to moderate intake of alcohol increases the risk of ischaemic stroke compared to nondrinkers and abstainers. Alcohol consumption is associated with an increased risk of ischaemic stroke in patients with newly diagnosed atrial fibrillation. Alcohol abstinence after such a diagnosis could help reduce the risk of ischaemic stroke. These findings can have a potentially important impact when identifying and managing modifiable risk factors for stroke in patients with atrial fibrillation. Lifestyle interventions, including greater attention to alcohol consumption, should be used as a comprehensive approach to manage and improve clinical outcomes in patients with newly diagnosed atrial fibrillation.

Source: [European Heart Journal](#)

Image Credit: iStock

Published on : Tue, 22 Jun 2021