

Study finds high health burdens of very high risk drinking

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In an *Addiction Biology* study, the estimated prevalence of very high risk drinking level (VHRDL, defined as drinking >100 g of ethanol per day) in 13 European Union countries was 0.74-0.85 percent, with a risk of disease or injury of 13.5 per 100 people with VHRDL per year.

In an additional analysis in 9 European countries, VHRDL caused 53.6 percent of all [liver cirrhosis](#), 43.8 percent of all pancreatitis, and 41.1 percent of [oral cavity](#) and pharyngeal cancers. Applying these findings to French mortality data resulted in a life expectancy of 47-61 years for people with VHRDL, which is 21-35 years less than the general population.

These results indicate that the health burdens of VHRDL are potentially large, and interventions targeting VHRDL should be considered when formulating public health policies.

"Public health seems to have overlooked people with very high drinking levels and seen them primarily as a small minority who should be helped clinically in the health care system. However, a more systematic analysis shows that marked burden of disease is associated with this drinking pattern in Europe, and more comprehensive policies should be considered," said lead author Dr. Jürgen Rehm, of the Institute for Mental Health Policy Research at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, in Canada.

More information: *Addiction Biology* (2018). [DOI: 10.1111/adb.12646](#)

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