

Does alcohol consumption have an effect on arthritis?

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Several previous studies have demonstrated that moderate alcohol consumption is linked with less severe disease and better quality of life in patients with rheumatoid arthritis, but a new *Arthritis Care & Research* study suggests that this might not be because drinking alcohol is beneficial.

In the 16,762-patient study, patients with a higher severity of disease were more likely to discontinue the use of alcohol and less likely to initiate use, and patients with greater disability and poor physical and mental quality of life were less likely to use alcohol over time. Also, [alcohol use](#) or recent changes in use were not associated with disease activity or death when considering the underlying factors influencing the behavior.

"Our data shows that when people aren't feeling well, they tend not to drink alcohol. While this makes it appear that people who drink are better off, it's probably not because the alcohol itself is helping," said lead author Dr. Joshua Baker, of the University of Pennsylvania.

More information: *Arthritis Care & Research*

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