

Drinking can trigger high death rate

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A UCLA study has determined older men who have as few as two drinks weekly and who have diseases that are worsened by alcohol have a high death rate.

Examining data from a 1971-74 health survey and a follow-up survey in 1992, researchers found older men who drank moderately or heavily and had accompanying comorbidities that could be worsened by alcohol use, such as gout or ulcers, or who took medications that might negatively interact with alcohol use had 20-percent higher mortality rates than other drinkers.

The study's lead author, Dr. Alison Moore, associate professor of geriatrics at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA, said the longitudinal study is the first to examine in a large population the mortality risks inherent in alcohol use and comorbidity.

The research is to be published in the May issue of the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society.

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