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Moderate wine consumption linked to lower risk of sudden cardiac arrest in major new study

Research highlights benefits of sparkling and white wine, with moderation emphasized amid ongoing debate over alcohol and health

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A new study published this week in the Canadian Journal of Cardiology has found that drinking wine, particularly sparkling and white varieties, can help reduce the risk of sudden cardiac arrest. The research, conducted by six scientists from the School of Public Health at Fudan University in Shanghai, analyzed data from the UK Biobank, a

long-term health study involving half a million British volunteers aged 40 to 69. These participants agreed to share their health data for three decades, providing a rich source of information for researchers investigating modifiable risk factors for heart disease.

The study identified four main lifestyle changes that can lower the risk of heart attack. The first two are increasing lung capacity and reducing waist circumference. The third and fourth are drinking more sparkling or white wine and red wine, respectively. The researchers noted that moderate consumption of these types of wine was associated with a lower risk of sudden cardiac death. Beer and cider also showed some benefit, though to a lesser extent.

Importantly, the study was not designed specifically to examine alcohol or wine consumption. Instead, it looked at 125 different behaviors that could be changed to improve heart health. The findings on wine emerged as part of this broader analysis. The authors referenced previous research showing that alcohol's effect on heart health follows a U-shaped curve: people who abstain completely or drink excessively have higher risks, while moderate drinkers—defined as up to two drinks per day for men and one for women—see the most benefit.

This news comes at a time when the wine industry is facing challenges from shifting consumer habits and increased scrutiny over alcohol's health effects. In recent years, some studies have highlighted potential risks associated with alcohol, such as an increased chance of certain cancers. However, heart disease remains the leading cause of death in the United States, making these new findings particularly relevant.

The results have been widely reported in English-speaking media outlets, with many focusing on the positive message for wine lovers. Some industry representatives see this as a welcome change from what they describe as negative or alarmist coverage about alcohol's health impacts. Tom Wark, executive director of the National Association of Wine Retailers, commented that nuanced reporting is needed to help consumers understand both the benefits and risks associated with moderate wine consumption.

The study also compared drinking wine to other lifestyle changes such as watching less television, lowering body mass index, and improving sleep habits. Interestingly, increasing wine intake ranked higher than improving sleep in terms of heart health benefits according to this analysis.

While the authors caution against excessive drinking and emphasize moderation, their findings suggest that enjoying a glass or two of wine each week could be one of the simplest ways for adults to support cardiovascular health. As more research emerges from large-scale datasets like the UK Biobank, public understanding of how everyday choices affect long-term health continues to evolve.

For now, those who enjoy wine in moderation may find reassurance in these results. The study adds to a growing body of evidence suggesting that moderate wine consumption can be part of a healthy lifestyle when combined with other positive habits such as regular exercise and maintaining a healthy weight. As always, individuals should consult with healthcare professionals about what is best for their personal health circumstances.