

Alcohol and pancreatic cancer

The latest available data for pancreatic cancer in the Philippines was for 2020, where the registry showed there were 153,751 new cases diagnosed that year alone. The increase of this malignancy globally suggests all incidence, in general, worldwide, will increase each year.

The incidence of pancreatic cancer **in the United States was around 66,440 in 2024, over half a million worldwide**. This very deadly and painful disease is usually diagnosed quite late and patients die within 6 months after detection. The pancreas is located deep at the back, behind the stomach, and eludes physical examination, making pancreatic tumor not palpable even by experienced surgeons.

Does alcohol consumption increase the risk for cancer of the pancreas? This has been a lingering query for centuries. Today, a global study of more than 2 million people, pooled data from 30 prospective cohorts, found that “**daily alcohol intake was associated with a ‘modest’ increased risk for pancreatic cancer** in both women and men, regardless of smoking status. This massive study also **confirms there is no safe level of alcohol**. One drink is one too many.

“I think this shows that alcohol use is a robust risk factor for pancreatic cancer,” said Genkinger, associate professor, epidemiology, Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health, New York City, noting that **even more moderate drinking levels**— no more than one drink for women and two for men — **might be enough to boost pancreatic cancer risk.**” – MedScape.

Cure for Alzheimer's?

Today, there is no known cure for Alzheimer's dementia. **In the United States there are 6.7 million people with Alzheimer's, 55 million around the world**. One in 9 people (10.8 percent) aged 65 and older have Alzheimer's;

5 percent among those aged 65 to 74; 13.1 percent of those 75-84; and **33.3 percent for those 85 and older.**

Researchers around the globe are actively seeking for a cure for this dementia. One current avenue is called **repurposing**, experimenting on currently approved medications that are used for other diseases.

“Two cancer medications that may help overturn brain changes caused by Alzheimer’s disease, possibly slowing or even reversing the disease’s symptoms,” according to Marina Sirota, PhD, professor and interim director of the University of California — San Francisco Bakar Computational Health Sciences Institute.

“We started with a set of 1,300 drugs and narrowed it down to the combination of *letrozole and irinotecan* through data driven analysis using both molecular and clinical data,” Sirota said. (Letrozole, used to treat breast cancer, and irinotecan, used to treat colorectal and lung cancer).

This new discovery provides hope to those patients ravaged by Alzheimer’s and their family who take care of them who are also suffering from the gravity of the duties and responsibilities, **much more difficult than taking care of several infants at the same time.**

Countless independent studies have been ongoing around the world, and this repurposing with a combination of drugs for cancer will inspire more research globally, which might then expedite the final realization of a cure for **Alzheimer’s Disease, a much-dreaded illness worse than death itself.**

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