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Comprehensive Alcohol Harm Review Shows Drinking Risk Starts at the First Drop

Kudos to Authors of New ICCPUD Alcohol Intake & Health Study

SAN RAFAEL, California (January 22, 2025) – [Alcohol Justice](#) is reporting that the answer to the question, does alcohol endanger health, has long been an unequivocal yes. [The Alcohol Intake and Health Study](#), released last week, clearly illustrates why: the range and impact of alcohol-related harms are too broad for there to ever be a safe level of drinking.

“Because alcohol is so embedded in our society, it can be difficult to say, ‘Here it is, here is the damage done by drinking,’” said Cruz Avila, Executive Director of Alcohol Justice. *“The study authors did a tremendous and thorough job following those threads and explaining their impact. They took a complex question and evidence base and delivered a straightforward recommendation. Namely, if you’re concerned about your health, don’t drink alcohol.”*

The study, organized by the [Interagency Coordinating Committee on the Prevention of Underage Drinking](#) (ICCPUD), an advisory body convened by the [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#) (SAMHSA), developed a picture of alcohol harm building off what is already known. The CDC identifies over 50 causes of harm and death that alcohol contributes to, from liver disease to suicide. [The Alcohol Intake and Health Study](#), in turn, assessed a “bottom-up” picture of alcohol risk by looking at how each of those causes contribute to the risk of consumption. Key findings include:

- Even low levels of alcohol consumption—1 drink per day—bring increased risk of harms, including cirrhosis, certain cancers, and accidental injuries.
- Risk of dying from an alcohol-related death is around 1 in 1000 for both men and women who consume more than 7 drinks a week, rising quickly to 1 in 100 for those consuming over 10 drinks a week.
- Women bear a disproportionately high risk of alcohol-related cancer.
- Even infrequent binge drinking days bring substantial increases in risk of harm.

“The study goes far beyond ‘health drinking’ questions,” stated Carson Benowitz-Fredericks, MSPH, Research Director at Alcohol Justice. *“It creates a roadmap for addressing so many harms, across so many contexts, for years to come. We are grateful for the authors’ labor, and the potential it has to save lives.”*

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