



Drinking Wine—Good For You Or Not?

(NAPSA)—If you've ever seen the TV show *Frasier*, you know how the fastidious Dr. Crane loves to talk about selecting the "right" wine with dinner. According to more than 60 medical doctors, researchers and experts recently gathered by the New York Academy of Sciences, *Frasier's* fondness for wine may well be good for his cardiovascular health.

Several studies suggest that the consumption of wine, particularly red wine, imparts a greater benefit in the prevention of heart disease than that obtained from drinking other alcoholic beverages. According to researchers, the presence of antioxidants in wine reduces the oxidation of LDL (lower-density lipids or "bad cholesterol") and increases HDL (high-density lipids or "good cholesterol") in the bloodstream, factors that reduce the risk of coronary disease.

However, experts caution that the risks of drinking (the possibility of alcoholism and alcohol induced disease and organ damage) should be weighed against the possible health benefits of drinking. Here's what some of the experts had to say;

- **Drinking patterns matter.** Studies indicate that while light drinking spread out over time is protective against coronary artery disease, drinking the same amount all at once yields no positive effect. The positive effects of alcohol are transient, explains Dr. R. Curtis Ellison of the Boston University School of Medicine. To reap a positive effect, one must drink small amounts every day.

- **Have wine with dinner.** It is simply not enough to have one or



Light consumption of red wine can protect some people (but not all) against some diseases (but not others).

two drinks a day, says Dr. Fulvio Ursini, a physician at the University of Padova in Italy. In order to reap the heart protective benefit of light drinking, one must have those drinks during a meal. Wine ingested apart from a meal has no food to act upon, and so provides little or no protection against oxidation.

Remember, too, experts say that certain people should never be advised to drink: youngsters and anyone with a past substance abuse problem or family history of alcoholism, as well as patients with certain medical conditions or taking certain medications.

When in doubt, ask your doctor. He or she knows you best and can advise you on how alcohol may—or may not—benefit your health. For further information visit www.nyas.org.

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