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Contact:

Sean Wagner

781-388-8550

Medicalnews@bos.blackwellpublishing.net

Heavy Drinking in Older Men Leads to More Falls, but not Fractures

Bone Mineral Density Higher in Both Light and Heavy Drinkers

San Francisco, Calif. – December XX, 2006 - Alcohol use may lead to clumsy behavior and loss of balance, but a new study, published in *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*, reveals that moderate to heavy drinking of alcohol does not lead to more broken bones. The research indicates that, while older men who drink heavily report more falls per year than non-drinkers, they do not necessarily experience a significantly higher rate of bone fractures.

The findings showed a positive correlation between bone mineral density and consumption of alcohol. However, Peggy Cawthon, author of the study, views this with caution. “Increased bone density does not necessarily decrease fracture risk.”

“Light drinking was actually associated with fewer falls than abstaining altogether.” The results were surprising and Cawthon was quick to assert that this information should not be construed as support for alcohol as a therapeutic treatment. “Given the association between a history of problem drinking and greater fall risk, it is not prudent to encourage light alcohol intake as a means to reduce falls in older men. Drinking heavily or any other risky behavior that increases the risk of falls may increase the risk of fractures.”

This study is published in *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*. Media wishing to receive a PDF of this article please contact

Medicalnews@bos.blackwellpublishing.net.

Peggy W. Cawthon is a consulting researcher at the California Pacific Medical Center Research Institute in San Francisco, and an associate lecturer at the University of Sydney, Australia. She can be reached for questions at pcawthon@sfcc-cpmc.net



The primary goal of the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* is to publish articles that are relevant in the broadest terms to the clinical care of older persons. Such articles may span a variety of disciplines and fields and may be of immediate, intermediate, or long-term potential benefit to clinical practice. For more information, please visit <http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/jgs>

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