Title: Alcohol and high blood pressure

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Abstract:

Research shows that reduction in alcohol intake among heavy drinkers significantly reduces systolic and diastolic BP. This effect was seen in hypertensive and non-hypertensive subjects and also in those already taking antihypertensive medications. The findings suggest that alcohol reduction should be recommended as an important component of lifestyle modification for the prevention and treatment of hypertension among heavy drinkers.

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Alcohol and High Blood Pressure

Is high blood pressure bad?
Yes. High blood pressure increases your chances of stroke, heart disease, kidney disease, dementia, and death. High blood pressure is sometimes called the ‘silent killer’ because it usually has no noticeable warning signs or symptoms until other serious problems arise, therefore many people do not know that they have it.

Does alcohol increase your chances of getting high blood pressure?
Yes. Research evidence show that if you drink too much alcohol you are more likely to have high blood pressure.

How much alcohol is bad?
Research evidence show that alcohol in moderation is protective for the heart. However, too much alcohol puts you at risk of developing high blood pressure and also puts you at a higher risk of developing stroke and heart problems.

Moderation is defined as having no more than 1 drink per day for women and no more than 2 drinks per day for men, where a drink is defined as 12 oz regular beer, 5 oz of wine, or 1.5 oz of 80-proof distilled spirit.

Consuming anything more per day is defined as too much alcohol consumption, or alcohol abuse.

Does stopping alcohol lower my blood pressure?
Yes. Research has shown that stopping or decreasing alcohol consumption will reduce your blood pressure and lower your chances of heart disease and stroke both in those with and without high blood pressure.
What if I already take blood pressure medications?

Blood pressure is often uncontrolled in those who drink too much even if they are taking medications. Stopping or reducing alcohol will help you and your doctor control your blood pressure better.

I want to stop drinking too much, what should I do next?

Speak with your doctor and come up with a plan that works for you. They can help you decide if you need more help and can go over options such as beer substitutes, counseling and Antabuse, (disulfiram).

For more information please visit these sites and speak with your doctor:

http://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/index.htm
http://www.niaaa.nih.gov/

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