

7 Types of Cancer with Dark Ties to Alcohol

A new advisory from the U.S. surgeon general categorizes alcohol consumption as the “third leading preventable cause of cancer” in the country.

Dr. Vivek Murthy issued the guidance Friday, stating new findings link alcohol to the chances of contracting at least seven different kinds of cancer: throat, liver, esophageal, mouth, larynx, colon and rectal cancers.

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Alcohol consumption, it should be noted, had already been tied to an increased susceptibility to breast cancer. Earlier data found some 16.4% of breast cancer diagnoses in the U.S. are attributable to alcohol.

The surgeon general shared details from the nascent research in a post published to X:

Consuming any type of alcohol – beer, wine, or spirits – increases the risk for at least seven types of cancer, including cancers of the breast for women, colorectum, esophagus, liver, mouth, throat, and voice box (larynx).

*– Dr. Vivek Murthy, U.S. Surgeon General (@Surgeon_General)
January 3, 2025*

“Alcohol is a well-established, preventable cause of cancer responsible for about 100,000 cases of cancer and 20,000 cancer deaths annually in the United States—greater than the 13,500 alcohol-associated traffic crash fatalities per year in

the U.S.—yet the majority of Americans are unaware of this risk,” Murthy said in a statement. “This advisory lays out steps we can all take to increase awareness of alcohol’s cancer risk and minimize harm.”

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New data found that, in 2019 alone, an estimated 96,730 were tied to alcohol consumption, including 42,400 in men and 54,330 in women.

The report summarized, in part, “Alcohol use is very common—in 2019-2020, 72% of U.S. adults reported they consumed one or more drinks per week, but less than half of U.S. adults are aware of the relationship between alcohol consumption and cancer risk.”

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