Alcohol can cause cancer-No amount of alcohol is safe

There has been so much in the literature about alcohol and its consequences of drinking. Recent publication of Medscape Oncology article by Laura Stokowski, RN, MS, April 30 2014 was headlined, “No amount of alcohol is safe” has elaborated the long term side effects of alcohol vs. few benefits. It is surprising to see so much buzz in the medical literature about this old topic but with newer emphasis. Heavy alcohol use causes hypertension, atrial fibrillation, ischemic and hemorrhagic stroke, non-ischemic dilated cardiomyopathy and off course the cancer.

According to Islam, use of alcohol is totally prohibited. Injunction came slowly and in stages since the Arabian society was preoccupied with alcohol. But finally in 610 AD the 18th year of Prophet Hood, total prohibition was applied. Of course, God knew all the benefit and risk which we are still in the process of discovering. Prohibition is so severe in Islam that even making, transporting, selling, promoting and consuming.

“Responsible drinking” has become 21st century mantra. when it comes to cancer no amount of alcohol is safe. That is the conclusion of the 2014 world cancer report issued by World Health Organizations International Agency for Research on

Cancer (IARC). Declared carcinogen by the IARC in 1988, alcohol can cause Esophageal Cancer as well as mouth, pharynx, Larynx, colon-rectum, liver, female breasts, and pancreatic cancer.

In a meta-analysis of 222 studies comprising of 92,000 light drinkers and 60,000 nondrinkers with cancer, light drinking was associated with risk for or pharyngeal cancer, esophageal cancer and breast cancer. From this meta-analysis it was estimated that in 2004 worldwide, 5,000 deaths from or pharyngeal cancer, 24,000 from esophageal cancer, and 5,000 from breast cancer, were attributable to light drinking.

Alcohol beverages can contain at least 15 carcinogenic compounds including acetaldehyde, benzene, formaldehyde, and lead. Ethanol is the most important carcinogen in alcoholic beverages and the rate of metabolism is genetically determined.

Avoidance of cigarette and alcohol could prevent up to 80% of oral cancer cases and 90% of laryngeal cancer cases. The center of disease control and prevention reports, “From 2001 to 2005 there were approximately 75,000 deaths annually attributable to excessive alcohol use. In fact excessive alcohol use is the 3rd leading life style related cause of death for people in the us each year. In 1993, studies estimated US death through alcohol at 100,000.

There are 12 other health risks of chronic heavy drinking. They include almost every organ in the body including alcoholic cardiomyopathy, ventricular fibrillation, and dementia, cirrhosis of liver, seizure depression, gouty arthritis, hypertension, anemia, pancreatitis and cancer. Alcohol causes most the damage to nervous system than any other common drugs. Alcohol is a leading cause of liver cancer in the western world accounting for 32 to 45 % of hepatic cancer. Up to half a million people in the US develop alcohol related liver cancer.

In conclusion: Alcohol drinking is dangerous to your health. Consequences of that seen every day with drunken drinking, premature death, numerous hospitalizations, and death. Something more need to be done to protect the consumer from the adverse consequences of alcohol. Glorification of alcohol, bombardment of advertisement and their sponsor of almost every other event is not surprising. It will be hard to wean people and business away from these habits. There has to be some balance between public advertisement and private consumption while still prevent medical repercussion. There need to be a public debate in the line of smoking ban in order to come up with right balance. There has to be new thinking in order to regulate the advertisement and the alcohol industries. Start will be curve the advertisement to prevent its glorification.

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