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## News Release

May 30, 2005

EMBARGOED UNTIL JUNE 1, 2005, AT 5 A.M. EST

### Is wine good for your health? New study says wine drinkers are just healthier people

BERKELEY, CA – The wine industry wants people to believe that wine itself is good for your health. But new research shows instead that wine drinkers simply live healthier lifestyles than beer drinkers, liquor drinkers or non-drinkers.

Wine drinkers exercise more, eat healthier diets, smoke less and have more normal body mass than people whose preference is beer or mixed drinks, according to research from the Prevention Research Center. Wine drinkers are more likely to be vegetarians, and they also have higher education levels, which has been associated with better health. Wine drinkers also don't drink as much as other drinkers, and so they have fewer alcohol-related problems than people whose preference is beer or liquor. In several health categories, such as body mass, diet and exercise, wine drinkers are healthier than people who don't drink at all.

*(more)*

The research is published in the June issue of the journal *Drug and Alcohol Dependence* and was funded by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism.

The wine industry has pushed for health benefits on labels, based on studies suggesting that light-to-moderate wine consumption may reduce risk for coronary disease and other health problems. But such research may not look at the whole picture.

“The notion that wine itself has health benefits fails to take into account a host of other factors, including that wine drinkers apparently live healthier lifestyles,” said Mallie Paschall, Ph.D., the principal investigator on the study. “Our finding that there’s a relationship between wine preference and healthy lifestyles raises questions about those studies that propose health benefits from wine itself.”

Dr. Paschall is a senior research scientist at the Berkeley, CA-based Prevention Research Center of the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation, a nationwide nonprofit public health research and program institute. The study, entitled “Wine preference and related health determinants in a U.S. national sample of young adults,” examined data collected from nearly 13,000 people who participated in the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health.

“Evidence from this and other studies raises doubts about the protective effects of wine,” Dr. Paschall said. “The research strongly suggests that adults who are light-to-moderate wine drinkers develop healthy lifestyle habits as adolescents and young adults before they become regular wine drinkers.” Dr. Paschall also said that only a long-term controlled study can determine whether light-to-moderate wine consumption actually has any beneficial health effects. But such a study is probably not feasible, he said.

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