The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Vodka Binges Kill Quarter of Russian Men Prematurely, Research Shows

By The Moscow Times

January 31, 2014



Throughout this time, 8,000 participants died from alcohol-related diseases.

Alcohol is the primary cause of the high number of premature deaths in Russia, research published Friday has shown.

The report, which appeared in the British journal The Lancet, shows that 25 percent of Russian men die before the age of 55, with the majority of these deaths attributed to alcohol — particularly vodka.

Some Russian men said that they drank up to one-and-a-half liters of vodka every week, the report said.

However researchers say the driving force behind the high death rate is not the amount consumed, but in the way Russians drink alcohol.

"They binge drink. That's the main problem. It's the pattern of drinking not the per-capita

amount they are drinking," said Professor David Zaridze of the Russian Cancer Research Center, BBC reported.

"Russians have always drunk a lot. They sometimes say it's because of the cold weather, but this is just an excuse. This is the nation's lifestyle that needs to change." Zaridze said.

The average life expectancy in Russia is 69 years, which falls just below the average world average of 70 years, according to a 2011 report published by the World Health Organization.

During the course of the 10-year study, more than 150,000 adults living in three Russian cities were monitored by researchers from the Russian Cancer Center, Oxford University, and the World Health Organization International Agency for Research on Cancer.

Throughout this time, 8,000 participants died from alcohol-related diseases including liver disease and alcohol poisoning. Many of the participants also died in accidents or after getting into fights.

The report also showed that smoking aggravated the negative health effects of alcohol, and that mortality rates were lower among women.

In 2006, Russia bought in stricter controls in a bid to tackle out-of-control drinking, with alcohol consumption having since fallen by a third, researchers said. The number of men dying before they reach their 55th birthday has also fallen, from 37 percent to 25 percent.

The release of the report coincided with the anniversary of Dmitry Mendeleev's doctoral paper "On Combining Alcohol and Water" in which he set the ideal proof for vodka at 40 percent.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2014/01/31/vodka-binges-kill-quarter-of-russian-men-prematurely-research-shows-a31623