

ALCOHOL AND BLOOD PRESSURE

Summary

This article presents the impact of ethyl alcohol on arterial blood pressure. This relationship can be linked both directly and indirectly with the impact of ethanol on the key stages of regulatory systems responsible for the control of arterial blood pressure. However, these processes are yet to be explained in greater detail by science. Numerous studies over the last years have shown that large doses of alcohol result in high arterial blood pressure (occasionally significantly exceeding the acceptable physiological levels) and may lead to hypertension and disorders in the circulatory system, eventually causing heart failure or ischemic heart disease. Despite the lack of consensus as to the impact of small and medium levels of alcohol consumption on the arterial blood pressure, it has been proved that frequent and un-

controlled consumption of alcohol always increases the risk of hypertension. In light of the latest studies, it is highly unlikely that moderate consumption of alcohol may have any positive impact either on heart, via lowering arterial blood pressure, or on reducing the risk of atherosclerosis, via lowering fats blood level. Due to the complexity of numerous factors influencing the relationship between consumption of alcohol and its impact on the arterial blood pressure it is currently still not possible to unambiguously determine an exact 'safe' (not leading to hypertension) doses of consumed alcohol. Further detailed studies on the mechanisms underlying this relationship may help to achieve a more precise estimation of the alcohol healthy doses.