

ALCOHOL AND VITAMINS

Summary

Chronic alcohol abuse leads to malnutrition, and thus to the deficiency of many nutrients, mainly vitamins A, B, C, D, E and K and microelements (Zn, Ca, Se). Reduction of biological functions of vitamins and oxidative stress induced by ethanol can have serious clinical consequences, including macrocytic and megaloblastic anemia, neurological disor-

ders, and chronic liver diseases. Deficiency of folic acid is connected with increased concentration in blood of homocysteine, named “cholesterol of XXI. century”. High levels of homocysteine in blood are in turn associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular diseases. Hiperhomocysteinemia may serve as one of the markers of alcohol toxic effects.