
Abstract

The authors analyzed 23-year mortality (1966-1989) in 2,171 subjects aged ≥ 40 years from a Busselton, Western Australia, prospective study. The analysis revealed significant inverse associations between alcohol consumption and mortality, with trends of decreasing mortality shown from nondrinkers to mild drinkers to moderate drinkers. Compared with nondrinkers, moderate drinkers had an adjusted relative risk of death due to all causes of 0.76 (95% confidence interval (CI) 0.61-0.94). The adjusted relative risk of cardiovascular disease death among moderate drinkers was 0.68 (95% CI 0.51-0.91), and that of coronary heart disease death was 0.66 (95% CI 0.45-0.98). Adjustment for baseline coronary disease risk factors strengthened these trends in the relative risks observed in both women and men. Baseline and follow-up data suggested that 87% of the nondrinkers were long-term abstainers, with 77% having been such for a lifetime.