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► [Are alcohol excise taxes good for us? Short and long-term effects on mortality rates.](#)

Cook P.J., Ostermann J., Sloan F.A.

Cambridge Massachusetts: National Bureau of Economic Research, 2005.

On the basis of US state-level data, concludes that higher alcohol taxes reduce the death rate by cutting consumption. Beneficial effects of moderate drinking in middle age are more than counter-balanced by adverse effects of heavier drinking and acute deaths in younger groups.

**Original abstract** Regression results from a 30-year panel of US state-level data indicate that changes in alcohol-excise taxes cause a reduction in drinking and lower all-cause mortality in the short run. But those results do not fully capture the long-term mortality effects of a permanent change in drinking levels. In particular, since moderate drinking has a protective effect against heart disease in middle age, it is possible that a reduction in per capita drinking will result in some people drinking "too little" and dying sooner than they otherwise would. To explore that possibility, we simulate the effect of a one per cent reduction in drinking on all-cause mortality for the age group 35–69, using several alternative assumptions about how the reduction is distributed across this population. We find that the long-term mortality effect of a one per cent reduction in drinking is essentially nil.

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