

## Wide range of genetic links to alcohol, tobacco use discovered in massive study

A new genetic study looking at smoking and drinking has confirmed much of what we already know about their impact on your health, but the study also found genetic associations that offer new insights into alcohol and tobacco use, as well as addiction.

Published [January 14] in the journal [Nature Genetics](#), the study is one of the largest genome-wide association studies to date, using data from more than 1.2 million people. Researchers working on this study found more than 500 genetic variants associated with smoking and alcohol use, including newly identified genetic associations that link alcohol and tobacco use with the release of dopamine in the brain.

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The study also showed that tobacco use was closely associated with a range of diseases — not just lung cancer. While that was not unexpected, the researchers were surprised that social drinkers — those who drank a moderate amount of alcohol each week — had fewer illnesses. This adds more fodder to the debate around whether moderate drinking may be beneficial to one's health

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Much of the data for this study came from 23andMe customers who consented to participate in research and answered survey questions about smoking and drinking. The remaining data came from more than two-dozen other study cohorts.

**Read full, original post:** Genetic Study of Nicotine and Alcohol Use Offers Insight into Addiction