

## Cancer and cocktails? Physician groups urge that alcohol should carry a warning label

In recent years, a growing number of medical and public health groups have introduced public awareness campaigns warning people to drink with caution, noting that alcohol is the third leading preventable cause of cancer, behind tobacco and obesity.

In October [2020], the American Society for Clinical Oncology (ASCO), which represents many of the nation's top cancer doctors, along with the American Institute for Cancer Research, the American Public Health Association and five other groups [called on the federal government](#) to add a cancer warning to alcohol labels, saying there was strong scientific consensus that alcohol can cause several types of cancer, including breast and colon cancers.

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The ongoing pandemic underscores the urgency of these efforts, as stress, lockdowns and economic uncertainty continue to [take a toll](#). In the past year, hospitals across the United States [have reported](#) an increase in admissions for hepatitis, liver failure and other alcohol-related diseases. A study [in the journal Psychiatry Research](#) found that in the first six months of lockdowns, alcohol abuse rose most sharply among people who lost their jobs or who were confined to their homes because of shelter-in-place restrictions.

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"There are grave concerns over the long-term health implications of the rising level of alcohol dependence," [the authors said.]

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