

Get headaches from red wine? Here's the culprit

While all types of alcohol can cause headaches, especially in people who are prone to migraines, [red wine](#) appears to be particularly pernicious. But scientists still aren't sure why it is a catalyst.

"This puzzle has been around for literally thousands of years," said Dr. Morris Levin, director of the Headache Center at the University of California, San Francisco, Medical Center. "There are a lot of ingredients in wine that could conceivably cause a headache, not the least of which is just alcohol itself."

A preliminary study [published Monday](#) in the journal Scientific Reports proposes a novel theory: An antioxidant found in grape skins affects how your body processes alcohol, leading to the buildup of a [toxic byproduct](#) that causes headaches.

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The simplest solution might be to switch wines. Both green and red grapes contain quercetin, but for white and rosé wines, the skins are removed immediately after the fruit is crushed. The skins are left in while red and orange wines ferment, so more quercetin leaches into the wine. There is [some research](#) into which red wines have lower quercetin levels, but there are no definitive answers yet.

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