

WellNews: Rethinking drinking

by Scott_LaFee

Forget the notion that older folks are smarter drinkers. When it comes to knowing whether you're alcohol-impaired, younger imbibers appear to know better.

University of Florida researchers conducted an experiment with 42 adults, half between the ages of 50 and 74, the other half ages 25 to 35. The participants were given either a carefully calibrated alcoholic drink (roughly the equivalent of a couple of glasses of wine) or a similar tasting placebo. Then they were asked to perform tests of motor skills and rate their level of intoxication.

The older participants typically performed worse on the motor skills tests, but consistently underestimated their drunkenness. One possible reason, said Sara Jo Nixon, the senior investigator: As people get older, they become inured to the effects of social drinking.

BODY OF KNOWLEDGE

Electrochemical messages travel through the body at roughly 200 miles per hour. Your brain receives signals of sight, touch, cold or warmth in just 0.1 to 0.2 seconds. Smell takes a little longer: 0.3 seconds. Pain lingers: 0.7 seconds.

NUMBER CRUNCHER

Two slices of French toast with butter but no syrup (135 grams) contains 356 calories, 169 from fat. It has 18.8 grams of total fat or 29 percent of the recommended total fat intake for a 2,000-calorie daily diet.

It also contains 116 milligrams of cholesterol (39 percent); 513 mg of sodium (21 percent); 36 grams of total carbohydrates (12 percent) and 10 g of protein.

DOC TALK

C-spine " shorthand for cervical spine or the neck

STORIES FOR THE WAITING ROOM

A new study reports that between 1990 and 2006 an average of 2,800 children under the age of 20 visited emergency rooms after falling out of treehouses. The study did not say how many people older than 20 fell out.

The most common injuries were fractures (37 percent), bruises (20 percent) and cuts (20 percent) to the upper body. Researchers found that falls greater than 10 feet tripled the odds of hospitalization.

Study investigators suggest government intervention.

"Treehouse safety deserves special attention because of the potential for serious injury or death due to falls from great heights, as well as the absence of national or regional safety standards," said Lara McKenzie of the Center for Injury Research and Policy.

OBSERVATION

If we can get our hands on this former president and subject him to some of our manipulations, it would be just a matter of time before he was really loving broccoli.

â€” Elizabeth Loftus on George H.W. Bush and his famous distaste of broccoli. Loftus, a psychologist at the University of California Irvine, says food aversions are often false memories easily reversed.

MEDTRONICA

Powerful girls have powerful bones

girlshealth.gov/bones

The site is operated by the federal Office on Women's Health, but the target audience is young girls. The message: Take care of your bones. It includes lots of age-appropriate advice about calcium-rich diets, exercise and avoiding a future of osteoporosis.

LAST WORDS

Get my swan costume ready.

â€” Russian ballerina Anna Pavlova (1881-1931)

Copyright 2009 Creators Syndicate Inc.

WellNews: Rethinking drinking by Scott_LaFee