

# HEALTH MATTERS



## FAB LIVING

W/ REBEKAH STAR

### I'll toast to that!

One of my favorite past times is reading. I enjoy gathering information and sharing it with friends and family. Not to persuade, but to inform. As I read through my favorite magazines, I enjoy the stories of different men and women who have changed lifestyle habits that lead to great long term benefits. Recently, alcohol consumption has been one of those. Often, if you are a regular drinker, cutting alcohol consumption down or out completely leads to a great deal of immediate weight loss. And since a whopping 67 percent of Americans are overweight, I'm sure most of us would like to lose a couple of pounds. There are a number of ways drinking habitually helps us and some ways it hurts.

We all know that mixed drinks, beer, and some wines are high in calories. So weight gain is an obvious side effect. But excess drinking can also lead to other health dangers such as alcoholism, high blood pressure, obesity, and even cancer. Health experts say it also can interrupt your sleep pattern. I've noticed in a number of different studies that lack of sleep sets off a chain reaction that causes your body to slow down it's natural ability to fight stress, fatigue, inflammation, infection, get rid of waste and so on. It a vicious, vicious cycle that we all need to be aware of and correct for our health!

I admit those are those nights that I like to go out, have a couple of drinks with friends, have some good food- or even attend tasting parties (as discussed last week). I had a

great time at last First Thursday's event with Tone and O.G One. You should all attend the next one in April. It was a great mix of professionals, music, and of course, for me wine! I decided my limit would be two glasses as I have read it should be. And that was perfect! It was a very tasty Cabernet and by the time I was ready to leave I wasn't worried about the long drive home, yet another benefit of limiting yourself. Men's Health Magazine also suggests making the second drink the last call for alcohol. In a landmark study published in the New England Journal of Medicine, researchers found that one or two drinks a day actually decreased blood pressure slightly. Three drinks or more a day, however, elevated blood pressure by an average of 10 points systolic and 4 diastolic. The type of alcohol doesn't matter. Order a Screwdriver, Incredible Hulk, or a glass of wine! But limit yourself to two drinks.

#### Know what to drink- And what not to for weight loss:

We like beer, we like wine- gin and tonics too! According to the book 'The ABS Diet', there are health

benefits to having one or two drinks a day, but there are many ways that alcohol can get you into trouble. Most important, alcohol, like soda, adds calories that aren't recognized by our brain, they are empty calories. We don't end up full or satisfied, so it actually leads to excess eating. In fact, research also shows that alcohol consumption also makes you eat more and encourages your body to burn less fat. When Swiss researchers gave eight healthy men enough alcohol to exceed their daily calorie requirements by 25 percent (equivalent to five beers for someone who consumes a 3,000 calorie diet), they found that booze actually impaired men's ability to burn fat by as much as 36 percent. Booze also makes you store fat! Your body sees most alcohol as poison and tries to get rid of it. Your liver stops processing other calories until it has dealt with the alcohol. So anything else you eat likely turns into fat. I don't know about you, but I don't want any of my organs to stop processing anything! And if you're on a serious weight loss plan, most studies I've seen suggest that it's best just to

cut out alcohol completely. I know- Easier said than done!

#### Something to Wine about...Red wine that is:

- Consumption of red wine on a regular basis may be a preventative against coronary heart disease.
- Wine drinking correlates with a lower risk for Alzheimer's disease.
- Resveratrol (and ingredient found in wine) can reduce your risk of heart disease. Wine also can raise your body's levels of HDL (good cholesterol), increasing heart health and can thin blood, decreasing the risk of blood clots.
- The phytochemicals in wine, specifically flavanoids and resveratrol, are antioxidants that act to prevent against cellular damage within your body.
- Two glasses of red wine (250 ml), taken together with the meal, lower post-meal blood pressure in hypertensive persons.
- Red wine intake reduces the risk of kidney stone formation.

Go ahead, grab a friend and open a bottle! Let's toast to great health!

Your questions and comments are truly appreciated. Please contact me on our Facebook page "FaB Living w/Rebekah Star", or send an email to [RebekahLiv@yahoo.com](mailto:RebekahLiv@yahoo.com). Until next week- Live Fabulously!

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## Toxins Pollute Fish Catch

Public Health officials are urging people who eat fish from the Columbia Slough to limit the amount they eat.

The advisory covers the full length of the waterway from the mouth of Fairview Lake on the east to the Willamette River on the west.

"We want people to be aware that there are certain fish that live their whole lives in the Columbia Slough and we know that these resident fish have higher amounts of toxins in them," said Barbara Stifel, an Oregon Public Health environmental health specialist.

A study found elevated levels of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in carp. As a result, health officials are advising people to eat no more than two portions per month from the Columbia Slough, and to prepare the fish in a way that eliminates most of the fat, where toxins such as PCBs concentrate.

PCBs can harm a baby's developing brain or nervous system. Therefore, it is especially important for women ages 18 to 45 and children to follow this advice, said Stifel.