

the nation

# Study says alcohol reduces heart risk

United Press International  
CHICAGO — A martini a day could keep the doctor away and reduce the risk of death from heart attack, Harvard University researchers say.

Tetotolers may argue virtue is on their side, but tipping has the endorsement of medical science. Researchers report that drinkers are less likely to die of heart attacks than non-drinkers.

The report appears in the Friday Journal of the American Medical Association, released over the weekend along with an editorial cautioning that, with 17 million alcoholics in the nation, tipping is not advisable for everyone.

A Harvard Medical School research team, headed by Dr. Charles H. Hennekens, reported alcohol from beer, wine or hard liquor — taken in moderation — provides protection against heart attack.

"Data indicate the lowered risk of coronary death among light to moderate drinkers (2 oz. or less of alcohol daily) is remarkably similar for beer, wine and liquor after adjusting for the different alcohol content of each of these types of beverages," the report said.

"Thus, it seems probable that a protective effect in coronary disease was actually due to alcohol itself rather than any other substances found in each type of drink."

But, they warned, "High alcohol

intake has been shown to cause an increase in fatal arrhythmias (irregularities of heartbeat.)"

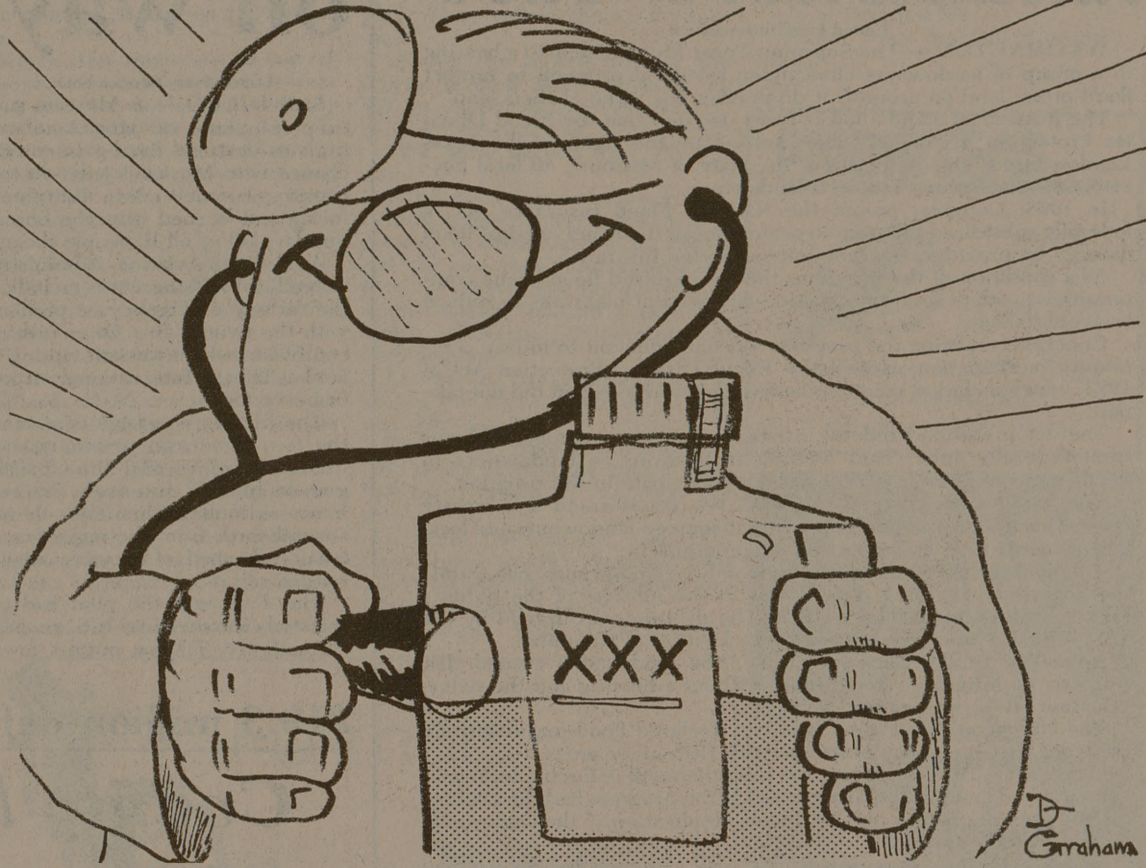
The researchers studied 568 married men who died of heart disease and an equal number of matched control subjects.

Further study was needed, they said, to determine how alcohol protects against heart disease. They urged further investigation of the effects of alcohol on lipoproteins — substances which, depending on density, can either guard against or help induce coronary artery disease that leads to heart attack.

They also called for more study of personality types and their effect on heart disease, noting a relaxed nature among moderate drinkers could help spare them from heart attack while "excessive drive" in both heavy drinkers and non-drinkers may increase their heart attack risk.

An accompanying editorial by Dr. W.F. Castelli of the National Heart Institute was cautious with the martini-a-day news.

"Zero intake of alcohol seems less healthful than a moderate intake, but higher intakes of alcohol are associated with increased rates of all the well-known problems that alcohol produces from nutritional, gastrointestinal, neurological, cardiovascular, hematologic, pulmonary, electrolyte and cancer problems," he said.



## Nutritious food found at fast-food bars

United Press International  
UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa. — Nutritious meals and special diets can be obtained in fast-food restaurants, says dietitian Louise W. Hamilton.

She recommends broiled instead of fried foods, fresh instead of canned fruits and going easy on dressings at the salad bar or on low-calorie platters. She also recommends staying away from creamed or buttered vegetables and anything that is oily, greasy or soggy.

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## Court to hear organisms case

# Can bacteria be patented?

United Press International  
WASHINGTON — In a case with broad implications for genetic research, the Supreme Court Monday agreed to consider whether living things may be patented.

The justices will hear arguments this term and rule on an appeal by the government from a federal patent appeals court decision that living organisms may be brought under patent.

At issue is a ruling by the United States Court of Customs and Patent Appeals approving patents in two separate cases — one for bacteria that break down oil into simpler substances, the other for a micro-organism that produces an antibiotic.

The bacteria strain was developed by Ananda Chakrabarty, who filed a patent application for the General Electric Co. in 1972. The bacteria can dissolve oil spills by breaking down petroleum components into simpler substances which ultimately become food for aquatic life.

The Board of Appeals for the Patent and Trademark Office ruled the bacteria do not occur in nature, but was overturned by the patent appeals court.

The second case was brought in 1974 when Malcolm Bergy and two other scientists applied for a patent for the Upjohn Co. on a new process to make the antibiotic lincomycin and for a patent for the micro-organism itself.

The patent examiner allowed patents for the process, but denied a patent for the micro-organism.

Ruling the micro-organism unpatentable because it is a living organism, the board relied on Congress' intent in a 1930 plant patent act.

Congress would not have acted to give specific patent protection to certain kinds of artificially produced plants if they were covered under general patent laws, the board reasoned.

Over two dissents, the patent appeals court reversed, holding that since patents are available for processes using a strain of living bacteria, it could not bar patents for a living bacterium itself.

At the request of the Supreme Court, the patent court took a second look at the two cases and came to the same conclusion, ruling patent law does not distinguish between living and inanimate matter.

"In short, we think the fact that micro-organisms are alive is a distinction without legal significance and that they should be treated under (patent law) no differently from chemical compounds," the majority held.

The government appealed to the Supreme Court, urging it to resolve the issue because of "substantial economic interests involved."


"Living things — whether naturally occurring, isolated or genetically engineered — are 'simply outside the scope of the general patent laws,' the government concluded.

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**Pure water fouls waste plant system**

United Press International  
MONROE, S.C. — The Baker Waste Treatment plant in Monroe recently suffered from a surplus of pure water.

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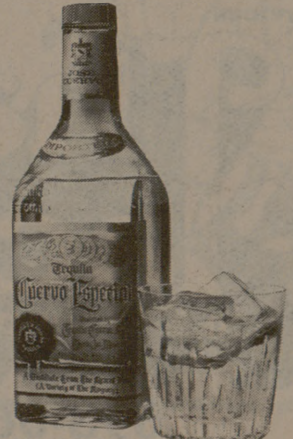
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