

AUGUST 17, 2003
INDEPENDENCE

In my mind wine is fine

In my mind, there is not much controversy regarding the benefits of alcohol, particularly red wine. This is not to say that I recommend it for everyone. Certainly, if there is pregnancy, an addictive personality, seizures, liver disease, a strong family history of alcoholism, age less than 21, or for religious or ethical reasons, I would not advise this healthy liquid. That being said, 70% of adult Americans can and should drink alcohol moderately. Moderation is no more than two drinks a day and a four hour window before one does detailed mental work, putting themselves in harms way such as climbing ladders, or operating motorized equipment such as automobiles. Although alcohol has been recommended for health since man first learned how to ferment fruits and vegetables and was given a healthful quality as noted biblically, use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments (1st Timothy 5, Verse 23). Thomas Jefferson was a very intelligent and "conservative liberal", who stated:

"My diet is that of fruits and vegetables, a rare meat dish and one drink a day. I have one-and-a-half drinks with a friend and occasionally drink twice that when I am involved with self-joy."

A study of alcohol concluded in 1974 detailed 25 years of consumption is the still ongoing famous Framingham research. This showed that alcohol was cardio-protective. When this information

Dr.

J.E.

Block



came to the U.S. government, who at that time was Republican and a little far to the right, it was squelched. However, in 1985, our government finally announced that alcohol, particularly wine, decreased the incidence of coronary artery disease. Later, the Nurses Health Study, which had been going on for thirty years and includes 54,000 nurses, the conclusion was similar. Studies in the U.K. showed the same thing and in 1995, their government officially recommended drinking was good for the health, unless there was a disease or drug contraindication.

There were some nay-sayers, in that folks who drank more than two drinks a day had a higher incidence of

Hemorrhagic stroke. However, most strokes are due to decreased blood flow and clotting, rather than

hemorrhage. In fact, there are thirty times more strokes due to this rather than hemorrhage. Next week, I

will discuss the specifics of a healthy drink.