

## Combining Alcohol and Acetaminophen Can Increase Risk of Kidney Disease

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Combining acetaminophen and even a small amount of alcohol can more than double a person's risk of developing kidney disease, according to a study presented at the American Public Health Association annual meeting.

Combining acetaminophen and a light to moderate amount of alcohol increases the risk of kidney disease 123 percent, *HealthDay* reports.

"Most people take this medication without any input from pharmacists or physicians, and that's where the public health concern is," said lead researcher Harrison Ndetan of Parker University in Dallas. "People buy acetaminophen over the counter, and they also are casual alcohol users, and they don't know that there is a harmful interaction."

The researchers analyzed data from more than 10,000 people participating in the 2003-04 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey. Normal use of acetaminophen, or light to moderate drinking, did not pose a potential threat to kidneys when used alone. Almost half of the 2.6 percent of people who combined acetaminophen and alcohol reported kidney-related health problems.

Ndetan said alcohol can interfere with the gene that regulates the body's processing of acetaminophen. In a news release, he said the findings are a particular concern for young adults. "Pain is the most common symptom among the general public and is also most frequently self-treated with acetaminophen," he said. "Where this becomes a greater concern is among young adults, who have a higher prevalence of alcohol consumption."