



The increased risk of esophageal cancer that is related to alcohol is reversible after a person gives up drinking, but it can take up to 16 years to return to the risk level for non-drinkers, a new study concludes.

About one-half of the reduction in risk of the cancer can occur within about four or five years of quitting drinking, HealthDay reports.

"Fifteen to 20 years for a complete reversal of risk of esophageal cancer to take place sounds like a long stretch; however, the effect of stopping alcohol consumption appears to emerge shortly after cessation, which is encouraging and should provide extra motivation for the promotion of this life-style change," researchers at Boston University Medical Center, who were not involved in the study, noted in a commentary accompanying the study in the journal *Addiction*.

The research was conducted by Swedish scientists, who examined the effect of giving up drinking on the risk of esophageal cancer in nine studies.

In addition to drinking a lot of alcohol over a long period of time, smoking is also a risk for esophageal cancer, the article notes.

To learn about the signs and symptoms of alcohol abuse, [click here](#).