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Does a Glass of Wine Really Help Take the Edge Off?

By admin

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You have a craptastic day and decide a glass of wine (or two or three) will help you chill out. But does the booze actually help un-frazzle your nerves? Or is that just what we like to tell ourselves?

"Drinking wine — and alcohol in general — is one of the most time-honored ways for disconnecting our brains at the end of the day," says Jacob Teitelbaum, M.D., board certified internist and author of numerous health and wellness books, his latest being *The Fatigue and Fibromyalgia Solution*. "This has been documented for over 5,000 years, and there's a good reason for its persistent popularity."

The reason? "Alcohol, including wine, calms transiently because it is a central nervous system depressant," explains David L. Katz, M.D., the founding director of Yale University's Prevention Research Center, and the author of *Disease-Proof*. In other words, alcohol is sedating.

But before you hop into your pajamas and pop your favorite Moscato, there are a few things to keep in mind, including how much you drink and when. "One glass of wine at dinner is apt to have a calming effect without impairing sleep," adds Dr. Katz. Yet drinking greater quantities of wine can have a direct effect on your metabolism, which can interrupt your slumber. "So the net effect of relying on alcohol for relaxation is adverse if too much is consumed, too close to bed time."

Dr. Teitelbaum also warns: "Those who suffer from severe gastritis and nighttime acid reflux should avoid wine since it can aggravate these conditions."

If you're looking for an extra health boost, sip a glass of red wine, as opposed to white. "Red wine contains resveratrol, which may decrease Alzheimer's risk and increase your life span," states Teitelbaum. In fact, a recent study conducted by researchers at Harvard Medical School discovered that this compound directly activates a protein that promotes health and longevity.

"What a great way to live long and love living!" says Teitelbaum. Right?

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