

In groups, alcohol a social lubricant

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United Press International:

Moderate amounts of alcohol — consumed in a social setting — can serve as a social lubricate, U.S. researchers suggest.

Lead author Michael A. Sayette, professor of psychology at the University of Pittsburgh, said it is usually taken for granted that people drink to reduce stress and enhance positive feelings, but many studies have shown that alcohol consumption has an opposite effect.

Previous studies tested the impact of alcohol on those who drink alone rather than in groups.

“Those studies may have failed to create realistic conditions for studying this highly social drug,” Sayette said in a statement. “We felt that many of the most significant effects of alcohol would more likely be revealed in an experiment using a social setting.”

Sayette and colleagues assembled small groups from the 720 male and female study participants.

The study, published online in *Psychological Science*, concluded alcohol stimulated social bonding, increased the amount of time people spend talking to one another and reduced displays of negative emotions.

Read the whole story: [United Press International](#)