

EDITORIALS | 6 FEBRUARY 2018

# Hot Tea and Esophageal Cancer

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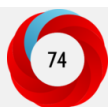
FULL TEXT

In their current *Annals* report, Yu and colleagues (1) show that drinking high-temperature tea, when combined with tobacco or alcohol use, is associated with an increased risk for esophageal cancer. Their study was well-designed. Its findings, which are based on long-term follow-up (median, 9.2 years) in more than 450 000 participants, are an important addition to the current literature (2). [MORE](#)

The hypothesis that drinking very hot beverages may cause esophageal cancer is not new. In the 1930s, based on clinical observations, New York physician W.L. Watson wrote, “Thermal irritation is probably the most constant factor predisposing to the cancer of the esophagus. The drinking of copious amount of excessively hot tea is a history frequently obtained from Russian-born patients coming to Memorial Hospital suffering from cancer of the esophagus” (3). Nevertheless, the association between hot beverages and esophageal cancer is not firmly established. An expert panel assembled by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) in 2016 classified drinking very hot beverages as a probable (class 2A) rather than a definite (class 1) carcinogen (2).

FULL TEXT

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