Dr. Andrea King and her colleagues recently completed a ground-breaking 10-year longitudinal study investigating trajectories of developing Alcohol Use Disorder in almost 200 adults (King et al, in press, American Journal of Psychiatry). Young healthy social drinkers completed laboratory-based alcohol challenge sessions to assess their responses to a single dose of alcohol, first at baseline and again 5 and 10 years later. The investigators monitored the participants’ habitual alcohol use over the years. About one fifth of the participants developed Alcohol Use Disorder during the 10-year period. Importantly, participants who reported stimulant-like responses to alcohol at baseline were most likely to progress to develop the Disorder, and their stimulant-like responses to alcohol persisted and even escalated over the three test sessions across the decade. The study provides a unique, rigorous prospective analysis of predictors of excessive drinking.


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