

Press Release

HKAM and HKCCM Oppose the Promotion of Alcohol Use during Sports

(Hong Kong, 4 August 2017) In light of an initiative of “Beer Run” organised by a social enterprise promulgating consumption of alcohol in a running activity to be held in November, the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine (HKAM) and the Hong Kong College of Community Medicine (HKCCM) oppose this improper suggestion and would like to state their position on this matter.

The HKAM and the HKCCM support the promotion of sport activities, and believe it will enhance the health of the community.

Alcohol has variable adverse effects on health. The HKCCM advises that consumption of alcohol over time, or on a single occasion, may cause detrimental effects on health. Effects on the brain may cause mood changes and depression. It may also cause liver cirrhosis, blood loss through the gut and pancreatitis. Alcohol users may also develop high blood pressure and heart disease.

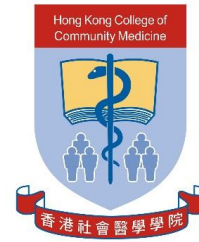
Alcohol is one of the most well-established causes of several types of cancers. It is strongly associated with cancers of oral cavity (mouth), pharynx (throat), larynx (voice box), oesophagus, liver, breast and colon & rectum (bowel). Chronic alcohol use is also associated with the development of certain cancers, particularly liver cancer. Furthermore, all types of alcohol increase cancer risks.

Excessive use of alcohol will impair the immune system and increase susceptibility to various infections.

Alcohol use during sports, such as running, is strongly discouraged. It will impair the judgement of the runners and lead to injuries. Its diuretic effects will cause further dehydration and enhance the risk of heat stroke, and in the worst case kidney failure. It will raise the heart rate with additional and excessive burden on the heart which already has to cope with the increased demand due to running. Moreover, it causes vasodilatation, further burdening the heart, and shunting blood away from the muscles where increased blood supply is needed during exercise. Shunting blood from the brain will increase the risk of faints too.

The HKAM and the HKCCM oppose the promotion of alcohol use during any sports activities.

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About Hong Kong Academy of Medicine

Established in 1993, the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine (HKAM) is an independent institution with statutory power to organise, monitor, assess and accredit all medical specialist training and oversee the provision of continuing medical education (CME) and continuous professional development (CPD) in the territory. Within 15 constituent Colleges, there are now 66 specialties and subspecialties, with more than 7,500 Academy Fellows who are eligible for registration in the Specialist Register of the Medical Council of Hong Kong or Dental Council of Hong Kong.

About Hong Kong College of Community Medicine

The Hong Kong College of Community Medicine (HKCCM), incorporated in 1991, is one of the 15 constituent specialty Colleges of the HKAM. The College has been striving for the mission of promoting the health of the population of Hong Kong through advocating the principles and practice of community medicine; organising specialist education and training; promoting research in the discipline; contributing expertise to the setting of health policies; and providing expert advice to the public in disease prevention and health promotion.

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