

## **A cohort study of drink driving motor vehicle crashes and alcohol-related diseases.**

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A population based cohort study involving 3286 drivers involved in a motor vehicle crash between 1988 and 1992 were followed over an 8 to 13 year period to elicit whether drivers involved in alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes were more likely to have future alcohol-related hospital admissions. The findings from the study suggest a twofold increased risk associated with an alcohol-related motor vehicle crash and future alcohol-related hospital admission. The average time between an alcohol-related motor vehicle crash and future alcohol-related hospital admission was 12 years. Men and Indigenous Australian drivers were more likely to have a future alcohol-related hospital admission. It is evident from this study that drink-driving resulting in a motor vehicle crash and hospitalisation could be considered an indicator of a less overt problem of alcohol dependency. It is important therefore, that penalties for drink driving recognise the basis of this critical issue.