



Light and regular beer taste same to young males, UVic study shows

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Young males subjected to a taste test of their favorite frothy friend couldn't tell the difference between low and regular strength beer, says a new study released by the University of Victoria today.

The UVic-based Centre for Addictions Research found most of the 34 participants equally enjoyed the two ales, the fun they had drinking it with friends and the perceived buzz they got from the beer, according to the study, which took place at UVic between August and October 2006.

However, the tried and true tastebuds of the beer drinkers did find a "small difference" in the taste, preferring the 5.3 per cent beer over the lighter 3.8 per cent beer.

Dave Segal, research assistant at the centre and a UVic graduate student, was supervised and funded by the centre, and the lower alcohol beer was donated by Victoria's Spinnakers Gastro Brewpub and GuestHouses.

The research centre recently recommended that the B.C. government make lower alcohol content beers cheaper to encourage their consumption higher alcohol products.

Beers with less than four per cent alcohol occupy only 0.2 per cent of the B.C. beer market, say researchers.

"New data indicates that there is a growing problem with alcohol in B.C. and in the nation as a whole," said Dr. Tim Stockwell, director of the research centre.

"Increased consumption of alcohol has led to increases in cancers, liver diseases, road trauma, violence, birth defects and a host of other causes of death, injury and illness."

Spinnakers owner Paul Hadfield said it would be refreshing if the government used taxation policies to achieve public health policy goals rather than just for "revenue generation."

Hadfield says he supports the research centre's position and has committed to lowering the price of his low alcohol products in the near future.

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