



Health warning labels for alcoholic beverages in Canada.

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Abstract: This paper reviews the background and rationale for health warning labels for alcoholic beverages. They have been recently approved for the United States. Mexico and Colombia already have such labels. However, Canadian health officials seem reluctant to require them unless the alcohol industry agrees. Arguments against labels (i.e. that they detract from other efforts, are misguided or ineffective) are not convincing. Evidence from research on health warnings on cigarettes and prescription and non-prescription drugs shows that labels can be effective if well designed. Special problems in having bilingual labels may exist but could be overcome. Canada should have health warning labels on alcoholic beverages as soon as possible.

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