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LIFE HEALTH & FITNESS

Couples may influence each other's binge drinking: Study

QMI AGENCY

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(Shutterstock)

You pick up your romantic partner's catchphrases and dabble in their hobbies - and you also may be binge drinking because of them, too, according to researchers at Dalhousie University.

Psychology researchers at the university examined the idea of whether couples influence each other's drinking habits by studying 208 unmarried, heterosexual couples in their 20s. The couples had to have been dating for at least three months, had to see each other at least five days a week and one of them had to be a university student.

Over a 28-day period, the researchers were able to predict one partner's binge drinking based on the other person's excessive drinking.

"Binge drinking in university students occurs in both young men and women," study lead author Aislin Mushquash said in a release recently. "Studies with married couples show that men have more of an influence on women, but in our study, we found both young women and young men influence their partner's binge drinking."

In a way, the study can be seen to be raising more questions than it answers, said assistant psychology professor Simon Sherry, who worked on the study.

"This research answers some key questions but also raises some key questions -- do birds of a feather all flock together? Do heavy drinkers naturally gravitate towards each other? Does each partner have a family history of alcoholism? These are questions we don't yet know the answers to."

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