

## **Platelet MAO activity in subtypes of alcoholics and controls in a homogenous population.**

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### **Abstract**

The level of platelet monoamine oxidase (MAO) activity has been found to vary between alcoholics and healthy controls and between subtypes of alcoholics, in different populations. This study measured the MAO activity in a group of 46 abstinent alcohol dependent subjects and 22 healthy non-alcoholic controls, male and female, in an ethnically homogenous Irish population. The healthy control subjects had a mean MAO activity of 0.27 pmol/hr/10(5) platelets (+/- SEM 0.03), while the alcoholics overall had a mean activity of 0.34 pmol/hr/10(5) platelets (+/- 0.03) and this difference was not significant,  $P = 0.2$ . When the alcoholic group was divided into subtypes of alcoholism, (type 1 and type 2) there was no difference between subtypes of alcoholics nor between each subtype and the controls in their MAO activity. There was no correlation between MAO activity and the age of the subjects, the duration of abstinence from alcohol, the severity of alcoholism, smoking status or the gender of the subjects. These data are discussed in the context of the current literature on alcoholism and platelet MAO in different ethnic populations and the status of platelet MAO as a potential marker for alcoholism.