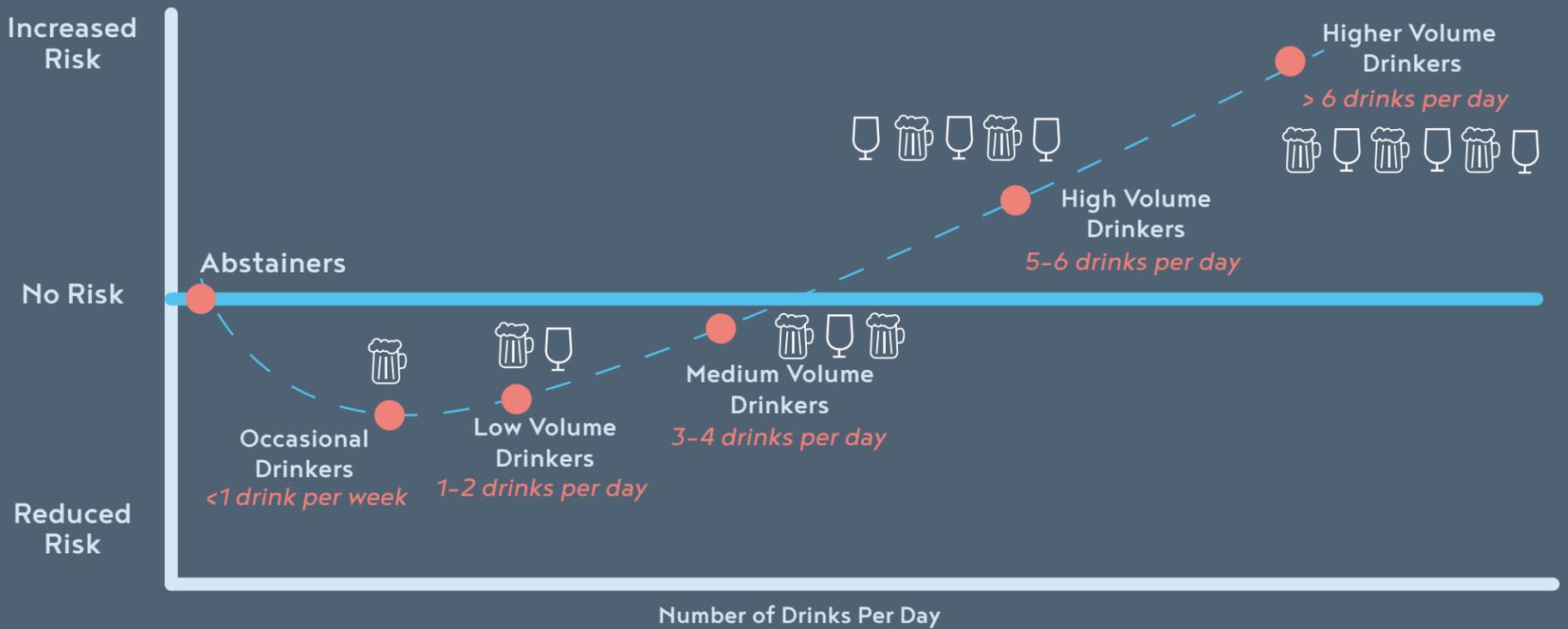


DO "MODERATE" DRINKERS LIVE LONGER?

We analyzed 87 published studies on alcohol and death from all causes.

On the surface, they show that moderate alcohol consumption reduces your risk of dying earlier.

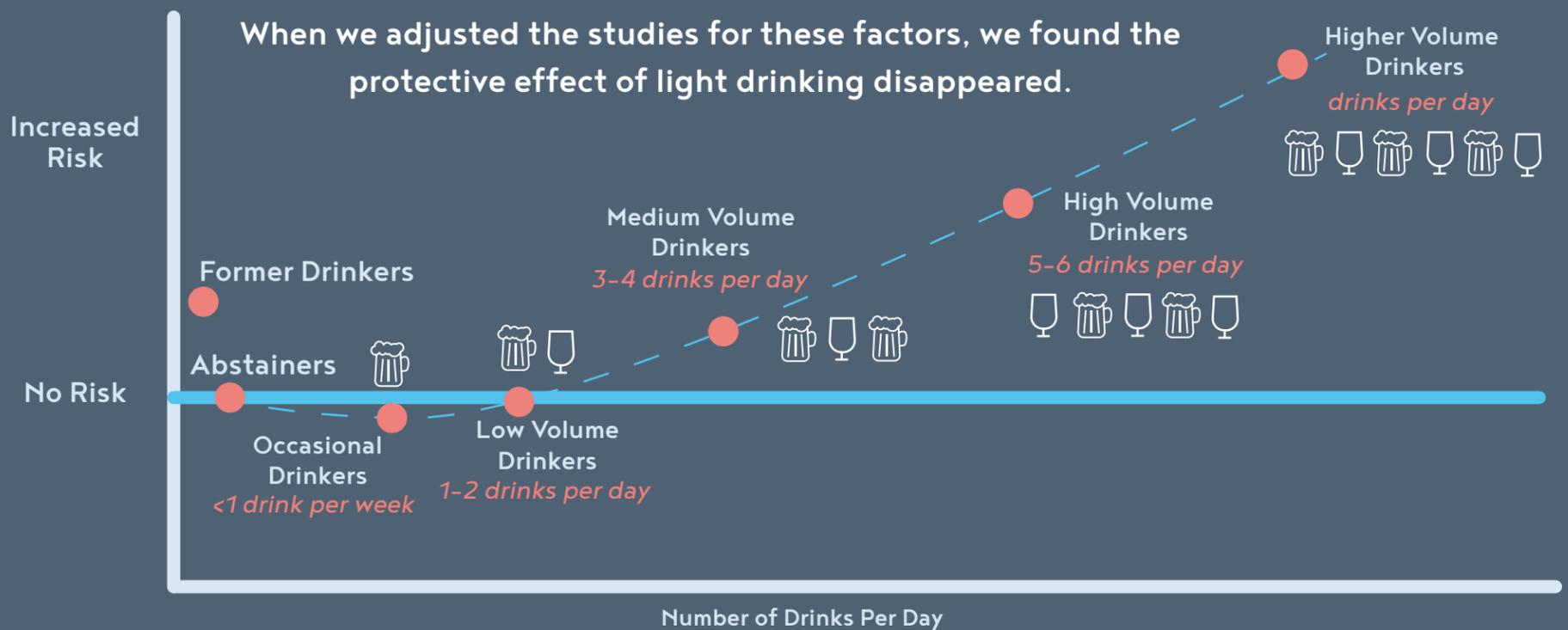


But a closer look at studies revealed that the "abstainer" group included:



This creates an abstainer bias that made light to moderate drinkers look good in comparison.

When we adjusted the studies for these factors, we found the protective effect of light drinking disappeared.



Only 13 of the 87 studies avoided "abstainer bias".

WE ALSO FOUND...

Only 6 of the 87 studies were considered high quality.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESEARCH



Studies on alcohol and health should separate both former and occasional drinkers from lifetime abstainers



Using occasional drinkers (less than one drink/week) as the reference group instead of abstainers may give a more accurate comparison.

This research suggests we should be skeptical of claims that alcohol consumption offers health benefits.



Centre for Addictions Research of BC

Source: Stockwell, T., Zhao, J., Panwar, S., Roemer, A., Naimi, T., & Chikritzhs, T. (March 2016). Do "moderate" drinkers have reduced mortality risk? A systematic review and meta-analysis of alcohol consumption and all-cause mortality. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs*, 77(2), 185-198. Available online at <http://dx.doi.org/10.15288/jsad.2016.77.185> or via email at carbc@uvic.ca.



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