A better understanding of how alcohol consumption increases breast cancer risk through changes in breast tissue composition (Table 3).

3) Lack of evidence for mediation by non-dense volume or fibroglandular and not fatty tissue.

Alcohol intake and breast density are two established risk factors for breast cancer.

- 4-10% of breast cancers estimated to be attributable to alcohol intake.
- A few studies have examined the association between alcohol, breast density and breast cancer. These suggest:
  - Breast density may be on the causal pathway between alcohol and breast cancer.
  - Alcohol may be more strongly related with breast cancer among women with dense breasts or with higher background risk.
- More recent volumetric measures of breast density are robust breast cancer risk factors.
- Mechanism through which alcohol influences breast cancer is not clear but hypothesized to be due to:
  - Increased circulating estrogen levels
  - Carcinogenic role of ethanol metabolites (i.e. acetaldehyde).
- A better understanding of how alcohol consumption increases breast cancer risk is crucial for developing breast cancer prevention strategies.