



Breastfeeding & Alcohol Consumption

Christmas Parties are in full swing. I have lots of emails and phone calls from Mums asking about alcohol and breastfeeding. Lots of Weddings on too over the festive season.

I enjoy my glass of wine and don't deny myself when we are out as it is not that often.

Now, that I'm pregnant over the festive season, I do what I did for all of my previous pregnancies, I enjoy my 1 glass of wine and I will drive home. Usually this is consumed with a meal. This is very occasional. Hard to get out with 2 babies!!

The same rule applies pretty much when breastfeeding. Also, Thomas Hale (2011) a well respected researcher in Milk and Medications says, "mothers who ingest alcohol in moderate amounts can generally return to breastfeeding as soon as they feel neurologically normal."

If you are safe to drive, you can breastfeed.

So, if you had one drink, you wait one hour to breastfeed (this also depends on BMI so, if BMI low, you wait longer), if you had 2 drinks, you wait two hours to breastfeed. Pumping and dumping does not rid the body quicker of alcohol, it is only for Mums relief. If you are away from baby, pump as often as you would feed. This is to maintain milk supply.

Alcohol does not accumulate in breastmilk but leaves the breastmilk like it leaves the bloodstream. So, if you were breathalysed and you were over the limit, you are over the limit to breastfeed!

How quickly alcohol enters our bloodstream and breastmilk does depend on a few things, if we are eating food at the same time, mums weight and body fat, if you are tired or not, so, all the factors that would affect anyone.

Alcohol in the system also slows down let down so, remember this when pumping.

So, keep it simple.



Enjoy that one or two glasses of wine (I'm taking this is not on a daily basis – this is a different story!).



If it's a Wedding/Christmas Party and you are away from baby, pump when you would feed your baby e.g. 3 hourly (to maintain milk supply).



If you are planning a big night out with more than 2 drinks, wait until you feel sober (as if you would if you had to go driving your car). Have back up supply ready for baby when you are planning a big night e.g. Expressed Breastmilk or formula. And you may have to pump to keep comfortable, it's only for your comfort.

Enjoy those parties and celebrations and remember safe breastfeeding!

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