

## Most Women Who Drink Before Pregnancy Continue While Pregnant

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Most women who drink before becoming pregnant continue consuming alcohol throughout their pregnancy, Australian researchers have found.

A study of 1,969 women found 82 percent consumed some alcohol during pregnancy, HealthCanal.com reports. Of these women, 77 percent consumed one or two drinks on the days they drank, and 90 percent drank no more than once or twice a week.

Women who drank weekly before pregnancy were 50 percent more likely to continue drinking during pregnancy, compared with women who drank less than weekly. Those who reported binge drinking before becoming pregnant were more than twice as likely to continue to drink during pregnancy.

Women who had fertility problems were 36 percent less likely to drink, compared with women who did not have difficulty becoming pregnant.

The study appears in *BJOG: An International Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology*.

A study published last year by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found almost 8 percent of pregnant women report alcohol use. The study analyzed data from almost 14,000 pregnant women and more than 330,000 non-pregnant women ages 18 to 44. About one in 13 pregnant women, or 7.6 percent, said they drank alcohol within the past month, compared with 51.5 percent of non-pregnant women.

The researchers found 1.4 percent of pregnant women reported binge drinking. Among pregnant women who said they engaged in binge drinking, those with a high school education or less reported binge drinking an average of 3.4 times a month, and having 6.4 drinks per occasion. In contrast, college graduates reported binge drinking 2.5 times per month, with 5.4 drinks per occasion. Binge drinking was more common among unmarried women.

Fetal Alcohol Effects (FAE) or Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is an umbrella term

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used to describe the range of effects that can occur in an individual exposed to alcohol. These effects may include physical, mental, behavioral, and/or learning disabilities and can have life-long implications. Prenatal exposure to alcohol may cause disabilities that range from mild to severe. Whether it is a wine cooler, a glass of wine or a bottle of beer, any kind or amount of alcohol that a pregnant mother consumes is also being consumed by her unborn baby. The best cure is prevention and FASD is 100 percent preventable if a pregnant woman abstains from alcohol. [Click here to read more.](#)