***Moderate Drinking Does Not Affect Fertility***

**By NICHOLAS BAKALAR**AUG. 31, 2016

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A new study has found that moderate alcohol consumption does not affect a woman’s ability to get pregnant, although higher amounts might.

Danish researchers studied 6,120 women trying to conceive in stable relationships with male partners. The women reported their drinking habits in questionnaires. By the end of the study, 4,210 of the women had gotten pregnant.

Women who drank the alcoholic equivalent of one to 13 four-ounce glasses of wine a week were no less likely to conceive than those who abstained completely. A typical bottle contains about 25 ounces of wine, and people often drink glasses containing five or more ounces.

Heavier drinking — the equivalent of two bottles of wine or more a week — was associated with an 18 percent decrease in fecundity.

The [study, in BMJ Open](http://www.bmj.com/content/354/bmj.i4262), followed a large number of women over nine years and included a mix of women who had had babies before and those who had not. The researchers adjusted for many factors, including time and frequency of intercourse. But they had no information about the alcohol intake of male partners, and alcohol is known to affect sperm quality.

The lead author, Ellen M. Mikkelsen, a senior researcher at Aarhus University, cautioned that a woman can be pregnant without being aware of it and that there are many other factors to take into account in achieving [pregnancy](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/health/diseasesconditionsandhealthtopics/pregnancy/index.html?inline=nyt-classifier), but was reluctant to offer women advice about drinking.

“If you know that you are *not* pregnant — if you’ve had a test — our results do not indicate that there is any danger in taking a drink. But we’re not saying anything about the health effects of alcohol in general,” she said.