



**IABLE**  
Institute for the Advancement  
of Breastfeeding &  
Lactation Education



## **Alcohol & Breastfeeding**

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Casual use of alcohol (such as 1 glass of wine or beer per day) is unlikely to cause either short- or long-term problems in the nursing infant. However, more than 2 drinks a day can have a negative effect on baby's development, causing a decrease in weight gain, agitation and sedation or poor sleep patterns.

### **Guidelines for Alcohol and Breastfeeding:**

- Mom can decrease alcohol in the breastmilk by waiting 2-2.5 hours per drink before nursing.
- Nursing or pumping within 1 hour before drinking alcohol may slightly reduce the amount of alcohol in breastmilk.
- The highest alcohol levels in milk occur 30 to 60 minutes after an alcoholic beverage.
- The breastmilk alcohol level closely parallels the blood alcohol level. As the blood alcohol level goes down, so does the breastmilk alcohol level.
- Alcohol decreases milk production, with 5 drinks or more decreasing milk letdown and disrupting nursing until maternal alcohol levels decrease.

Source of this information is from Toxnet, through the National Library of Medicine,  
<http://toxnet.nlm.nih.gov>