

Alcohol in pregnancy: the media coverage



1019

About this Attention Score

In the top 5% of all research outputs scored by Altmetric

Mentioned by

- 113 news outlets
- 5 blogs
- 1 policy source
- 102 tweeters
- 6 Facebook pages

Readers on

- 16 Mendeley

Scientists say a lack of evidence has led to inconsistent advice

BBC Breakfast @BBCBreakfast · Sep 11

Is there any responsible level of drinking during pregnancy? @BristolUni says 70 years of research has failed to provide consistent advice.



#BehindTheHeadlines

"There is little evidence having the occasional drink while pregnant harms a baby," reports the Mail Online.

No evidence of harm is not the same as evidence of no harm; there could still be risks that haven't been identified.

Behind The Headlines gives you the facts without the fiction

NHS Choices @NHSChoices · Sep 12

No change to alcohol guidelines for pregnancy. More from #BehindTheHeadlines:

No change to alcohol guidelines for pregnancy

"There is little evidence having the occasional drink while pregnant harms a baby," reports... nhs.uk

HuffPost UK @HuffPostUK · Sep 12

There is no proven safe amount of alcohol in pregnancy. No alcohol, no risk - @SB_FASD blogs

There Is No Proven Safe Amount Of Alcohol In Pregnancy. No Alcohol, No Risk

A recent study published in the British Medical Journal Open shows that there is a need for... huffingtonpost.co.uk

Gizmodo @Gizmodo · Sep 15

No, scientists did not say light drinking during pregnancy was okay

No, Scientists Did Not Say Light Drinking During Pregnancy Was Okay

"I don't know" and "yes" are very different things. "I don't know if my child is allergic to..." gizmodo.com

Simon Singh @SLSingh · Sep 14

17 16

.@thetimes gets it wrong & then sticks it on the front page. I hope @katlay passes on criticism to bosses. Shame to cut vital DS quote.

David Spiegelhalter @d_spiegel

Dire front-page Times headline today uses quote from nobody which misrepresents story. They also cut me saying precaution is reasonable :(





Two glasses of wine per week fine during pregnancy

This Morning @thismorning · Sep 16

14 71

Good news for all the mums out there as new reports suggest 'light drinking' is safe during pregnancy. Dr Chris has all the details...

Sir

In relation to "Light drinking does no harm in pregnancy"*, [The Times 12/09/2017](#)

We write to you to complain about the **highly misleading front page coverage** that your paper dedicated yesterday to our scientific study, and to rectify the wrong messages you have propagated.

Frustratingly, in today's paper your columnist has said: "Alcohol [...] drinking in pregnancy, which many health professionals considered a crime only a month ago, now appears to be acceptable in moderation" (from "Take health advice with a big pinch of salt" The Times 13/09/2017). This continues the misinformation that yesterday's article started. To say that "light drinking does no harm in pregnancy" is a gross misrepresentation of our findings – detailed in the scientific paper, summarised in the press release, and distilled and interpreted in plain language by one of our lead authors in conversation with your journalist.

We went to great lengths to stress that **'little or no evidence does not mean little or no effect'**. In other words, **we have little evidence that light drinking in pregnancy is harmful, but we also have little evidence that it is safe!** Conversely, your bold front page headline conveys certainty around its safety, which is irresponsible.

Such misreporting may boost newspaper sales, but does not benefit public health. Providing a health message in plain contradiction to existing Department of Health guidelines, when this is explicitly not supported by the research supposedly being reported, is irresponsible. Today's unborn babies won't be buying copies of your paper anytime soon, but one day this misreporting could cost them, and the nation looking after them, very dearly.

Yours

Dr Luisa Zuccolo, on behalf of the authors of "Low alcohol consumption and pregnancy and

Luisa Zuccolo @Luisa_Zu · Sep 14

1.2K 743

Our rebuttal the Times won't publish

PH people- rt to fight irresponsible misinformation
@mendel_random @soozaphone @d_spiegel

NHS NIHR NIHR CLAHRC West @CLAHRC_West · Sep 17

130 76

Yet more misinterpretation of our findings. This is definitely NOT what we found. Women should abstain from #alcohol during #pregnancy



This Morning @thismorning

Good news for all the mums out there as new reports suggest 'light drinking' is safe during pregnancy. Dr Chris has all the details...

Chris van Tulleken @DoctorChrisVT · Sep 15

12 20

Good response from @thetimes - there's no evidence that moderate drinking in pregnancy is safe.

Luisa Zuccolo @Luisa_Zu

Thanks for helping put this right @katlay twitter.com/katlay/status/...

Contact the researchers:
l.zuccolo@bristol.ac.uk, @Luisa_Zu
l.mamluk@bristol.ac.uk, @Lmamluk

For more on the social media story, visit <http://bit.ly/AlcPregMoment>