

SPECIAL REPORT THE REAL RISKS OF PREGNANCY WEIGHT GAIN

Pregnancy & Birth

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Q I normally use wine in my cooking. Now I'm pregnant, I'm confused as to whether this is OK. Am I putting my baby at risk?

Katy, north London



OUR DIETICIAN NATHALIE JONES SAYS 'In 2008 the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) said pregnant

women and those planning to conceive should avoid drinking alcohol in the first three months of pregnancy because it might be associated with an increased risk of miscarriage.

'They also advised that, if women do drink when pregnant, they should have no more than one to two units once or twice a week (one unit = half a pint of ordinary strength beer or a 25ml shot of spirit. One 125ml glass of wine = one and a half units).

'Although there is uncertainty over what is a safe level of consumption in pregnancy, at this low level there is no evidence of harm to the baby. When it comes to cooking with alcohol, it's unknown how much alcohol is



An occasional drop can also go into recipes

left and whether it would exceed the limit. Experts are divided, but many feel it is unlikely this limit would be reached given the small amounts of alcohol used in recipes.

'If you are concerned, why not add flavour with balsamic vinegar or herbs and spices? And if you occasionally eat in restaurants where alcohol is used, please do not worry.'

*** BE INSPIRED... Index Chopping Boards,**

£42, *Joseph Joseph** Ensure you prepare meat, fish and veg separately to reduce your risk of food poisoning – especially dangerous when pregnant.



Eat this... Asparagus

The asparagus season starts at the end of the month, so tuck in to this tasty risotto full of spring vegetables. Asparagus is a great source of folic acid, so it helps protect your baby against neural tube defects, such as spina bifida. And it'll give you a fix of immune-boosting vitamin C, too. This recipe and lots more can be found on askamum.co.uk*

- 1 Heat 1tbsp olive oil in a heavy-bottomed pan. Fry one onion, finely chopped, over a low heat until softened. Add three cloves of finely chopped garlic to the pan and fry for a further minute.
- 2 Add 200g risotto rice and stir for a minute or two.
- 3 Prepare 600ml of chicken or vegetable stock. Add a ladleful at a time, letting it absorb, stirring all the time.
- 4 With your last ladleful of stock, add 10 chopped spears of asparagus, 80g fresh or frozen peas and 80g fresh or frozen broad beans.
- 5 The rice is done when it's soft but still has bite.
- 6 Stir in 10g butter, 30g Cheddar cheese and 2tbsp mixed herbs and serve.

ON TEST

Hot cross buns

Get in the Easter mood and enjoy the extra 200 calories you need (just go easy on the butter!)

WHOLEMEAL HOT CROSS BUNS, WAITROSE (£1.24/FOUR)

The favourite in the P&b office. The bread's light, with a lovely nutty taste, but because it's wholemeal it leaves you feeling virtuous and fuller for longer.

183 kcal/3.2g fat per bun.

RATING ★★★★★



APPLE & CINNAMON HOT CROSS BUNS, TESCO (£1/FOUR)

If you've got a sweet tooth, this might be the bun for you. We found it a bit sickly and the cinnamon is so strong we couldn't taste the apple.

180 kcal/4.2g fat per bun.

RATING ★★★★★



TASTE THE DIFFERENCE FRUITY HOT CROSS BUNS, SAINSBURY'S (£1.20/FOUR)

The least healthy we tested. These left P&b divided when it came to the taste test; the raisins are tasty

but the bun itself is bland. 206 kcal/5.6g fat per bun.

RATING ★★★★★



Find more recipes and watch a nutrition video at askamum.co.uk/pregnancynutrition.