AIMS For a better birth...

They said what?

AIMS Journal, 2013, Vol 25 No 3

'You can buy test strips to check for alcohol levels in your milk.'

These magic strips of course do not tell you what, if any, harm it might do, or that formula is also full of potentially harmful additives, or that if you are parenting whilst severely impaired due to alcohol, the levels in your milk might be less of a concern than being responsive to your baby.

This is a gadget that preys on women's concerns about doing the best for their baby, feeds into the misconception that breastmilk may not be best and into the myth that breastfeeding stops you from going out and having fun.

Alcohol concentration in milk is roughly the same as the alcohol concentration of the blood plasma generating the milk. 0.5% blood plasma alcohol is a deadly level, yet drinking a liquid with a 0.5% alcohol content will have little or no effect. A person with a 0.1% blood concentration of alcohol is likely to be intoxicated, 0.08% blood alcohol content is the UK's drink driving limit. However, 0.1% alcohol is the level of alcohol that occurs naturally in fresh orange juice. These strips detect alcohol at 13.1mg/dL; 100mg/dL would be equal to a 0.1% concentration of alcohol, so it would seem that they are encouraging women to worry over an alcohol level that may be undetectable in their baby.

'You can buy a gadget to check your milk production.'

Another gem from a similar mindset. It is a pump, and evidence shows clearly that the amount a woman can express bears little relation to the quantity of milk available to her baby. Should marketing of gadgets designed to knock women's confidence come under the WHO Code?