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## Red Wine Improves Sex Lives of Tuscan Women

**A study finds those who drink a glass or two a day score higher on a sexual function questionnaire**

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Light to moderate consumption of red wine may lead to improved sexual function in women, according to a study in the October issue of the *Journal of Sexual Medicine*. Women who drank one or two glasses of red wine a day scored higher on a questionnaire focused on sexual health and enjoyment. According to the study's authors, members of the departments of Urology and Public Health at the University of Florence, the results help give a clearer picture on the female sexual response cycle.

In the medical industry, most studies on sexual health tend to focus on factors that cause dysfunction. For example, a recent study on erectile dysfunction found that moderate levels of alcohol consumption lead to a 30 percent lower chance of impotence.

"Historically, the aspects of wine and sexuality have been well known since the time of Ancient Greece," said the study's lead author, Dr. Nicola Mondaini, who is publishing a book on the subject next month, titled *Vino e Eros*. "But the field of female sexual dysfunction is still highly unexplored."

Mondaini and his team write that the sexual response of women is generally considered more complex than that of men. But previous studies, they add, find that adherence to the Mediterranean diet improves cardiovascular health, and this is likely due to the inclusion of a glass or two of red wine per day. Cardiovascular health has long been linked to sexual health.

To see if red wine consumption, as described by the Mediterranean diet, has an impact on women's sexual function, the scientists selected nearly 800 women for the study, ages 18 to 50, who visited the Santa Maria Annunziata Hospital, part of the University of Florence. Women who drank more than two glasses per day, smokers and those with sexual disorders were excluded.

The women completed a questionnaire, the Female Sexual Function Index, which is used by doctors to assess women and sexual health. It includes 19 questions and has a total score range between 2 and 36, with higher scores meaning better sexual health.

Overall, women who drank two glasses a day scored an average of 27.3 points, compared to 25.9 for those who drank one glass and 24.4 for the non-drinkers. Even more surprising was the fact that the two-glass-a-day drinkers were, on average, older than the other two groups, and age tends to be associated with a declining sex drive.

"A thorough comprehension of the mechanisms underlying female sexuality remains difficult," the study text concludes.