

# ALCOHOL & PREGNANCY

Fetal exposure to alcohol is one of the main causes of birth defects and developmental disabilities in America. More than 10 percent of women in the United States drink during pregnancy, and one in 30 pregnant women drink frequently or binge drink (having five or more drinks at one time).

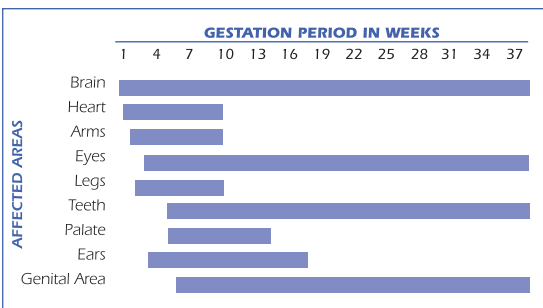


## Facts about Alcohol & Pregnancy

- Alcohol is known to be harmful to human development.
- The placenta does not protect your baby from the negative effects of alcohol. When you drink alcohol, your baby drinks with you.
- Women should not drink alcohol at any point during pregnancy. All drinks that contain alcohol can be harmful to your baby. There is no safe amount of alcohol to drink during pregnancy.
- Drinking can cause problems in the early weeks of pregnancy, before a woman even knows she is pregnant. Women who are sexually active and can become pregnant should avoid drinking.

## How does alcohol affect my baby?

There is no known amount of alcohol that is safe to consume during pregnancy. The more you drink, the more you raise your baby's chances of having problems including physical and mental disabilities. If you are pregnant, it is important that you stop drinking.



If you need additional information, contact the Family Health Line at 1-800-451-BABY (2229)

## What are FAS and FASDs?

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is a term used to describe a group of physical and mental birth defects that can happen if a woman drinks alcohol during pregnancy. One of the most severe FASDs is Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS). Babies born with FAS often have faces that do not look "normal", are smaller than other babies and have central nervous system problems. Individuals with FAS or other FASDs might have problems with learning, memory, attention span, communication, vision, hearing, as well as problems with their hearts, kidneys or bones. FAS is a permanent condition. All FASDs are 100% preventable.

## What if I drank alcohol before I knew I was pregnant?

If you were not aware that you were pregnant and drank alcohol, the best thing you can do now is stop drinking. Make sure you get regular prenatal checkups and let your prenatal care provider know you have been drinking.

## I want to stop drinking. How can I get help?

If you are not able to stop drinking alcohol during your pregnancy, it is important to get help as soon as you can. Talk to your prenatal care provider about options for treatment. If you are pregnant and have an addiction to alcohol, you can get help from the following organizations:

**National Clearinghouse for Alcohol & Drug Information**  
1-800-729-6686

**National Alcohol & Drug Hopeline**  
1-800-NCA-CALL (622-2255)

If you would like to know more about Fetal Alcohol Syndrome you can call:

**National Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome**  
1-800-66-NOFAS (666-6327)

Compiled using information from:

March of Dimes <http://www.marchofdimes.com/>

Department of Health & Human Services  
<http://www.hhs.gov/>



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