

Be Safe: Have an alcohol-free pregnancy



Give your baby the best start possible.

Pregnancy is a turning point in life, a time for new beginnings. A healthy start is important – for you and your baby. Choose not to drink any alcohol during your pregnancy. Read on to find answers to your questions about alcohol and pregnancy...

What might happen if I drink alcohol when I am pregnant?

Drinking alcohol during pregnancy can cause permanent birth defects and brain damage to your baby. To help your baby be as healthy as possible, stop drinking alcohol.

Be safe – no alcohol

Is there a safe time to drink alcohol?

There is no safe time to drink alcohol during pregnancy. Your baby's brain is developing throughout pregnancy. The safest choice during pregnancy is no alcohol at all. In fact, it is best to stop drinking before you get pregnant.

What if I had a couple of drinks before I knew I was pregnant?

Many pregnancies are not planned. Having a small amount of alcohol before you knew you were pregnant is not likely to harm your baby. You can help your baby by stopping drinking. Call Motherisk for information at 1-877-FAS-INFO.

Is it OK to have a few drinks at a special event?

It is best not to drink any alcohol during your pregnancy. There is no known safe level of alcohol use during pregnancy.

Are some types of alcohol less harmful?

Any type of alcohol can harm your baby (beer, coolers, wine or spirits). Binge drinking and heavy drinking are very harmful to an unborn baby.

No safe time – No safe amount

What is FASD?

FASD or Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder is a term that describes the full range of harm that is caused by alcohol use in pregnancy. If a pregnant woman drinks alcohol, her baby may have:

- brain damage
- vision and hearing difficulties
- bones, limbs and fingers that are not properly formed
- heart, kidney, liver and other organ damage
- slow growth

Brain damage means that a child may have serious difficulties with:

- learning
- remembering
- thinking things through
- getting along with others

Do children with FASD grow out of their problems?

There are many things teachers and parents can do to help children with FASD. However, FASD is a life-long problem. Teens or adults with FASD may have:

- depression
- trouble with the law
- drug or alcohol problems
- difficulty living on their own
- trouble keeping a job

What if the father drinks alcohol?

If the father drinks alcohol, it will not cause FASD. However, fathers should also try to be as healthy as possible before and during pregnancy.

How can others help?

Partners, family and friends can help pregnant women to stop drinking by being supportive and encouraging.

You can make a difference



Worried about your baby?
Looking for advice or information?
Need help to stop drinking?

Call:

- Your health care provider
- Your local health unit
- Your local Friendship Centre
- Telehealth Ontario 1-866-797-0000

For more information visit:

www.alcoholfreepregnancy.ca

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