

Alcohol Use and Pregnancy

What is it and why is it bad for the baby?

- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) is the term used for the ways babies are harmed by alcohol the mom drank while she was pregnant.
- Drinking alcohol while you are pregnant increases the risk of alcohol-related birth defects.
- Some of the possible birth defects are below.
 - mental retardation.
 - abnormal facial features.
 - growth problems.
 - problems with the central nervous system.
 - vision and hearing problems.
 - behavior problems.
 - a hard time with learning and focusing on things.
- Alcohol can damage a fetus at any stage of pregnancy. This includes the early weeks before a woman knows that she is pregnant.
- Any alcohol use during pregnancy can lead to a bigger chance of having a miscarriage. It can also lead to premature births.
- The problems caused by FAS last throughout the child's whole life.
- None of the problems can be cured.
- Alcohol changes how the "wiring" in your baby's brain is designed.
- Alcohol-related birth defects are completely preventable.
- FAS are the most common cause for mental retardation that could have been prevented.

What can I do?

- Drinking alcohol while you are pregnant causes FAS.
- No amount of alcohol is safe to consume while you are pregnant.
- Any alcohol consumption poses a significant risk to a developing baby.
- Ask your doctor or care manager for help if you are having trouble not drinking alcohol during your pregnancy.

The best way to help your baby is by not drinking alcohol during your pregnancy.