

From the time you find out you're pregnant, you'll want to give your baby the best start at life. **Our choices impact our children's lives.**

Alcohol

The CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) states that there is no known safe amount of alcohol use during pregnancy. It is hard to research the effects of alcohol consumption during pregnancy. One reason is research has to be retrospective and depends on the mother's memory of how much she drank during the pregnancy. This is not only hard to remember, but is difficult as drinking amounts are often minimized and many people are not honest in their answers of how much they drank when you ask them. **Even when your baby is very small, there's a whole lot of development going on.**

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASDs) are a group of conditions that occur in babies who were exposed to alcohol in the womb.

There are a wide variety of symptoms, including²⁵ :

- Growth issues, like low birth weight and slowed growth after birth
- Birth defects, like facial abnormalities, heart or kidney defects, vision or hearing loss
- Neurological problems, like learning disabilities and poor coordination
- Behavioral issues, like fussiness and sleeping troubles

The more you drink, the more the risks increase for your baby. If you are used to drinking alcohol regularly, it can be difficult to change your habits when you become pregnant.

Here are some tips :

- **Keep alcohol out of your home.**
- **Talk to your friends and family about your decision to stop drinking.**
- **Keep away from people and places that encourage you to drink, if possible.**
- **Practice how to say no to a drink.**
- **Choose a nonalcoholic version of a drink you like or find a "mocktail" recipe online.**

Smoking

Babies exposed to cigarette smoke:

- Are more likely to die from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, or SIDS.
- Are more likely to be stillborn or born early. In fact, preterm delivery is a leading cause of death, disability, and disease among newborns.
- Have a higher risk for birth defects like cleft lips and/or cleft palates.
- Have a greater likelihood of lung and brain damage.

These devastating complications come from the two main toxins that cigarettes produce: nicotine and carbon monoxide.

Together these chemicals significantly reduce the supply of oxygen to your baby. Nicotine narrows the blood vessels throughout your body and in the umbilical cord, choking off the supply of oxygen. Red blood cells that normally carry oxygen start to pick up molecules of carbon monoxide. This further reduces the amount of oxygen carried in your bloodstream and to your baby. In other words, when you smoke, vape, or are exposed to second and third hand smoke, your baby isn't getting all of the oxygen she needs to grow. Mothers should quit smoking immediately and limit their exposure to other smokers. **The sooner a mother quits, or even reduces her smoking, the risk begins to decrease. Minimize time spent in places where smoking is allowed – even if no one is smoking at the time.**

Resources include:

1. Abuse, National Institute on Drug. "Mind Matters: The Body's Response to Nicotine, Tobacco and Vaping." NIDA for Teens, National Institute on Drug Abuse, 4 Feb. 2021, teens.drugabuse.gov/teachers/mind-matters/nicotine. Accessed 11-18-21
2. "Health Effects." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 28 Apr. 2020, www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/health_effects/index.htm. Accessed 11-18-21
3. "2014 Surgeon General's Report: The Health Consequences of Smoking-50 Years of Progress." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 21 May 2021, www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/sgr/50th-anniversary/index.htm. Accessed 11-18-21
4. "Press Release." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 28 Feb. 2011, www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2011/p0228_smokingpregnancy.html. Accessed 11-18-21
5. "Substance Use During Pregnancy." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 15 July 2020, www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/maternalinfanthealth/tobaccousepregnancy/index.htm. Accessed 11-18-21
6. "Dual Use of Tobacco Products." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 5 Oct. 2021, www.cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/diseases/dual-tobacco-use.html. Accessed 11-18-21
7. Formation of Carcinogens Indoors by Surface ... - PNAS. National Academy of Sciences, 13 Apr. 2010, www.pnas.org/content/pnas/107/15/6576.full.pdf. Burton, Adrian. "Does the Smoke Ever Really Clear? Thirdhand Smoke Exposure Raises New Concerns." Environmental Health Perspectives, National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, Feb. 2011, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3040625/. Accessed 11-18-21
8. Burton, Adrian. "Does the Smoke Ever Really Clear? Thirdhand Smoke Exposure Raises New Concerns." Environmental Health Perspectives, National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, Feb. 2011, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3040625/. Accessed 11-18-21
9. Sleiman, Mohamad, et al. "Inhalable Constituents of Thirdhand Tobacco Smoke: Chemical Characterization and Health Impact Considerations." Environmental Science & Technology, vol. 48, no. 22, 15 Oct. 2014, pp. 13093–13101., doi:10.1021/es5036333. Accessed 11-18-21
10. "Where We Stand: Smoking during Pregnancy." HealthyChildren.org, American Academy of Pediatrics, 19 Nov. 2019, www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/prenatal/Pages/Where-We-Stand-Smoking-During-Pregnancy.aspx. Accessed 11-18-21
11. "Alcohol and Pregnancy." American Pregnancy Association, 16 July 2021, americanpregnancy.org/pregnancy-health/pregnancy-and-alcohol/. Accessed 11-18-21
12. Alcohol Use in Pregnancy - Centers for Disease Control and ... Center for Disease Control and Prevention, www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/documents/fasd_alcoholuse.pdf. Accessed 11-18-21
13. An Alcohol-Free Pregnancy Is the Best Choice for Your Baby. Center for Disease Control and Prevention, www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/documents/fasdbrochure_final.pdf. Accessed 11-18-21
14. Reducing Alcohol Exposed Pregnancies. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Mar. 2009, www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/documents/RedAlcohPreg.pdf. Accessed 11-18-21
15. O'Neil, Erica. "The Embryo Project Encyclopedia." Developmental Timeline of Alcohol-Induced Birth Defects | The Embryo Project Encyclopedia, Arizona State University, 4 July 2018, embryo.asu.edu/handle/10776/2101. Accessed 11-18-21
16. Kristen J. Gough and Dr. Laura Riley November 05, 2009. "Week 6 Ultrasound: What It Would Look Like." Parents, 5 Nov. 2009, www.parents.com/pregnancy/week-by-week/6/your-growing-baby-week-six. Accessed 11-18-21
17. "Basics about FASDs." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 21 May 2021, www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/facts.html. Accessed 11-18-21
18. Black, Ronald A., and D. Ashley Hill. "Over-the-Counter Medications in Pregnancy." American Family Physician, American Academy of Family Physicians, 15 June 2003, www.aafp.org/afp/2003/0615/p2517.html. Accessed 11-18-21
19. "Treating for Two: Medicine and Pregnancy." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 12 Mar. 2021, www.cdc.gov/pregnancy/meds/index.html. Accessed 11-18-21
20. "10 Over-the-Counter Drugs to Avoid during Pregnancy - Consumer Reports." 10 Over-the-Counter Drugs to Avoid During Pregnancy - Consumer Reports, Consumer Reports, June 2014, www.consumerreports.org/cro/2012/05/10-over-the-counter-drugs-to-avoid-during-pregnancy/index.htm. Accessed 11-18-21
21. "Using Illegal Drugs during Pregnancy." American Pregnancy Association, 27 Oct. 2021, americanpregnancy.org/pregnancy-health/illegal-drugs-during-pregnancy. Accessed 11-18-21
22. "Cocaine." MotherToBaby, 14 Sept. 2021, mothertobaby.org/fact-sheets/cocaine-pregnancy. Accessed 11-18-21
23. National Institute on Drug Abuse. "What Are the Long-Term Effects of Methamphetamine Misuse?" National Institute on Drug Abuse, National Institutes of Health, 13 Apr. 2021, www.drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/methamphetamine/what-are-long-term-effects-methamphetamine-abuse. Accessed 11-18-21
24. National Institute on Drug Abuse. "How Is Methamphetamine Misused?" National Institute on Drug Abuse, National Institute of Health, 13 Apr. 2021, www.drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/methamphetamine/how-methamphetamine-abused. Accessed 11-18-21
25. Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (for Parents) - Nemours KidsHealth. (2020). Kidshealth.org. <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/fas.html>