

Busting the Myths about Drinking During Pregnancy

Drinking alcohol during pregnancy can cause birth defects, brain injury, and fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD). There is no known amount of alcohol that can be considered safe during pregnancy. All major health groups advise that if a person is pregnant or may become pregnant, they should abstain from alcohol.

There are many myths surrounding alcohol use during pregnancy.

MYTH	MYTH	MYTH
Wine is safe to drink during pregnancy. Wine is safe to drink especially if it's just one or two glasses here and there.	FASD is only common in certain communities.	It's safe to drink alcohol at the end of the pregnancy.
FACT	FACT	FACT
All types of alcohol contain chemicals known as teratogens. These are harmful to a developing baby. Drinking any kind of alcohol can impact the baby's development. The safest choice is to not drink any alcohol during pregnancy.	In the United States, 1 in 7 pregnancies are exposed to alcohol. As many as 1 in 20 children have an FASD. FASD affects people from all races, all ethnicities and all income levels.	The baby's brain develops throughout the entire pregnancy. Drinking at any time during pregnancy can cause permanent brain injury. The safest choice is to not drink if you're pregnant.
MYTH	MYTH	MYTH
Effects of drinking during pregnancy will go away as a child gets older.	Women in Europe drink while pregnant without issue.	People who drink during pregnancy don't care about their baby.
FACT	FACT	FACT
Drinking when you're pregnant changes how the baby's brain develops. These changes are permanent. There is no cure for FASD. Getting the right help early on can help people with FASD be happy, healthy and successful.	Some countries in Europe have very high rates of alcohol use during pregnancy. Because of this, 4 of the 5 countries with the highest rates of fetal alcohol syndrome are in Europe. These countries are Croatia, Ireland, Italy and Belarus.	Many things can lead to an alcohol-exposed pregnancy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Not knowing you're pregnant •Not knowing the risks •Getting incorrect information •Knowing someone who drank during pregnancy whose child doesn't have an FASD diagnosis •Being part of a community where drinking is normal •Having an alcohol use disorder



Everyone plays a role in preventing FASD:

- If you can become pregnant, talk with your care provider about preventing an alcohol exposed pregnancy.
- If you are a health care provider, take every opportunity to have conversations with patients about alcohol use before and during pregnancy.
- Become an advocate for change as it relates to alcohol policies in your community and state.
- Learn more about FASD and how you can support those impacted by this disorder at proofalliance.org.

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