

# PREGNANCY & ALCOHOL

## Understanding the risks

### WHAT ABOUT THE BABIES?

Consuming alcohol can affect the drinker as well as a developing fetus. **Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASDs)** can occur when a person with a uterus drinks alcohol during pregnancy. Absorbed alcohol in the blood passes from parent to the unborn child through the umbilical cord; therefore, when they drink, so does the baby.

Every year, approximately 3.3 million Americans with a uterus risk exposing their developing babies to FASDs. Symptoms of FASDs are varied but can include:

- Abnormal physical features (wide-set narrow eyes, small head, shorter-than-average height)
- Hyperactive behavior
- Low IQ
- Learning disabilities/speech and language delays
- Vision or hearing problems
- Poor coordination

Behaviors associated with FASDs impair social interactions, academic achievement, and mental health. **As a result, children who suffer from FASDs often grow into adults who experience difficulties with mental health, substance abuse, and unemployment.** There is conflicting information about how much alcohol is unsafe during pregnancy, so consult your doctor before pouring a glass.



### RUNNING THE NUMBERS

About 20% to 30% of pregnant people report drinking during pregnancy, usually during the first trimester. (NIAAA)



An estimated 2% to 5% of U.S. schoolchildren may be affected by prenatal alcohol exposure, which can cause complications with growth, behavior, and learning. (APA)



There is no known "safe" amount of alcohol for someone to drink while they are pregnant. (CDC)



### QUITTING TIME

For more information on the causes, consequences, prevention and treatment of alcohol-related problems, check out the following resources:

- National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism: [www.niaaa.nih.gov](http://www.niaaa.nih.gov)
- Women for Sobriety: [www.womenforsobriety.org](http://www.womenforsobriety.org)
- SMART Recovery: [www.smartrecovery.org](http://www.smartrecovery.org)
- Adult Children of Alcoholics: [www.adultchildren.org](http://www.adultchildren.org)
- Moderation Management: [www.moderation.org](http://www.moderation.org)
- Alcoholics Anonymous (AA): [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org)

