

Is there a cure?

- There is no cure.
- People with FASDs who get help early have a greater chance of reaching their full potential as children and adults
- If you think your child has an FASD, or if you drank alcohol while you were pregnant, you should talk with your child's doctor as soon as possible.
- For more information about FASDs, talk with counselors at your child's school so that they can get help for your child.

How can I prevent FASD?

- Do not drink alcohol if you are pregnant or planning to be pregnant.
- If you think you might be pregnant, stop drinking now.
- Do not wait until you know for sure that you are pregnant.
- If you have trouble stopping your drinking, use birth control so you do not get pregnant until you can stop drinking.

What if I need help to stop drinking?

- Trying to stop drinking can be very hard. But there are many people who will help you.
- You can get free help from people who know what you are going through.
- Call Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). The number is in your phone book, or visit www.aa.org.
- There are also many alcohol treatment centers who will help. Give them a call.
- Even if you have tried to stop drinking before, try again. Don't give up.
- Use birth control so that you do not get pregnant until you can get your drinking under control.

For more information about FASDs and other ways to make sure you have a healthy baby, contact:

The Arc
1825 K Street NW, Suite 1200
Washington, DC 20006
(800) 433-5255

e-mail: Info@thearc.org
www.TheArc.org

Find your local chapter by visiting The Arc's website.



Did you know that if you drink alcohol when you are pregnant,



You can hurt your unborn baby

If you are:

- ✓ pregnant now,
- ✓ planning to get pregnant, or
- ✓ having sex, but not using any birth control

Think Before
You **Drink**

Why is drinking alcohol while I'm pregnant such a bad thing?

- If you drink alcohol while you are pregnant, you can hurt your baby's brain, heart, kidneys, and other organs.



- Then your baby could be born with fetal alcohol spectrum disorders, or FASDs.
- Babies born with FASDs have faces that do not look "normal."
- FASD is an umbrella term that includes a broad range of effects that can occur in someone whose mother drank alcohol during pregnancy. It is the leading known cause of intellectual disabilities that is 100% preventable.

- Different terms are used to describe FASDs, depending on the type of symptoms. Types of diagnoses include FAS (Fetal Alcohol Syndrome), ARND (Alcohol-Related Neurodevelopmental Disorder and ARBD (Alcohol-Related Birth Defects).
- Some babies with FASDs will have intellectual or developmental disabilities.
- Other babies will have a hard time learning and controlling how they act.
- These problems do not go away. They last a lifetime.

What if I'm not planning to have a baby yet?

- Lots of women do not plan on getting pregnant. But it happens—every day.
- Most women do not know they are pregnant until they've missed at least one or two periods.
- Women who drink alcohol and do not use birth control when they have sex may get pregnant and expose their baby to alcohol before they know they are pregnant.

Is it okay to drink a little during pregnancy, as long as I don't drink hard liquor?

- No. There is no known safe level of alcohol you can drink during pregnancy.
- A 12-ounce can of beer has the same amount of alcohol as a 4-ounce glass of wine or a 1-ounce shot of straight liquor.
- Some drinks, like wine coolers or malt or mixed drinks, may have more alcohol in them than a 12-ounce can of beer.
- The best choice is not to drink at all when you are pregnant.



I drank before I knew I was pregnant. What should I do?

- It is never too late to stop. The sooner you stop drinking, the better it will be for both you and your baby.
- Make sure you get regular prenatal checkups and tell your doctor or nurse you have been drinking.
- They can give you tips on what to do. Follow their advice.

If I drank when I was pregnant, does that mean my baby will have an FASD?

- It is not always easy to tell if a newborn baby has an FASD.
- Alcohol can affect unborn babies in different ways.
- Even if a baby does not experience problems of FAS (the most severe diagnosis on the spectrum), the baby may be born with other problems.
- While some babies will have intellectual disabilities, other babies will have learning or behavioral issues instead. Some will have both.