

# Help keep your baby safe and healthy during pregnancy - avoid drinking alcohol.

By making the choice not to drink any alcohol while pregnant or trying for a baby you are helping to keep your baby safe and healthy. This leaflet will help you find answers to your questions about alcohol and pregnancy.



**What are the risks to my baby if I drink when I am pregnant?**

When we drink alcohol it enters our bloodstream. If you are pregnant alcohol passes through the placenta into your baby's bloodstream, this may cause permanent life-long damage to your baby. It also increases risk of miscarriage. For more about the risks read the section **What is FASD?**

**Is there a safe time or type of alcohol to drink during pregnancy?**

There is no safe time to drink alcohol during pregnancy and no known safe amount.

All types and strengths of alcohol can harm your baby. Even drinking alcohol before you know you are pregnant can be harmful. Drinking no alcohol before you get pregnant and while pregnant means that you will be helping to keep your baby safe and healthy.

**Is it OK to have a small amount of alcohol on special occasions?**

There is no known safe level of alcohol use during pregnancy; therefore it is safest not to drink any alcohol. We do know that binge drinking and heavy drinking are most harmful to your baby.

**I drank alcohol before I knew I was pregnant, what should I do?**

Be reassured that if you've been drinking small amounts the risk is low. The best thing you can do for your baby is to stop drinking alcohol for the rest of your pregnancy. If you have been drinking during pregnancy, especially binge drinking, speak to your midwife and she can offer advice and support during and after pregnancy.

## What is FASD?

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is a term that describes the full range of harm that is caused by drinking alcohol during pregnancy.

If a woman drinks alcohol while pregnant, her baby may have:

- brain damage
- vision and hearing difficulties
- poor formation of bones and limbs
- organ damage
- slow growth



### More information

If you want to know more about alcohol, pregnancy and FASD visit:

[www.scotland.gov.uk/  
alcoholandpregnancy](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/alcoholandpregnancy)

[www.nofas-uk.org](http://www.nofas-uk.org)

For advice and information or if you are finding it difficult to stop drinking please speak to your midwife, GP or a local alcohol and drug support service.

- FASD is preventable.
- If you want to be sure that your baby is protected from FASD, avoid alcohol for the duration of your pregnancy.
- There is no known safe amount of alcohol to drink while pregnant.
- Everyone has a role to play in supporting pregnant women to avoid alcohol.



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# Help keep your baby safe and healthy

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pregnant or trying for a baby



**No alcohol, no risk**

