

September 9, 2005

FACT
SHEET

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Awareness Day

Awareness Day Goals

- Promote awareness of the effects of prenatal exposure to alcohol
- Increase compassion for individuals affected by prenatal exposure to alcohol
- Minimize further effects of prenatal exposure to alcohol
- Ensure healthier communities across Wisconsin
- Ensure women with alcohol concerns have a point of contact within their own community

Alcohol Use and Pregnancy

- Drinking during pregnancy can cause permanent harm to a developing baby
- In Wisconsin, over 66 percent of women of childbearing age drink alcohol, and over 25% of women report frequent alcohol consumption
- A recent study showed that 25% of Wisconsin women screened positive for at-risk drinking

- There is no known safe amount of alcohol to use during pregnancy.
- There is no known safe time to drink during pregnancy.
- However, it is never too late to stop drinking during pregnancy.

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD)

- When a pregnant woman drinks alcohol the baby can develop a range of permanent physical, cognitive, and/or behavioral problems— often called Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD)
- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) is the most recognizable medical condition caused by drinking alcohol during pregnancy
- Individuals with FAS have brain damage, are small in size, and have facial abnormalities

FASD Prevention

- Prenatal exposure to alcohol is a leading preventable cause of birth defects and developmental problems
- In Wisconsin it is estimated that each year 150-200 babies are born with FASD
- The adverse effects of prenatal exposure to alcohol are preventable—if a woman doesn't drink alcohol during her pregnancy she will not have a child with a FASD

If you are pregnant, or could become pregnant, don't drink alcohol.

For more information contact the Healthy Choices Project
Phone: 608-261-1418 Email: healthy.choices@fammed.wisc.edu

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Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD)

- Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) is an umbrella term used to describe the range of physical, cognitive, and behavioral effects caused by alcohol use during pregnancy.
- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) is the most recognizable of these disorders and is characterized by central nervous system deficits, growth retardation, and classic facial malformations.
- The central nervous system (CNS) deficits associated with prenatal exposure to alcohol include poor fine and gross motor coordination and a range of cognitive disabilities including learning disabilities and mental retardation, speech and language deficits, memory and processing problems, and attention problems.
- The growth deficits associated with prenatal exposure to alcohol includes prenatal growth retardation; birth weight, length and head circumference below the 10th percentile; and/or postnatal growth retardation.
- The facial malformations associated with prenatal exposure to alcohol are small eye openings, indistinct ridge between mouth and nose, and thin upper lip.
- Individuals with FASD often need lifelong services including educational, vocational, residential, and/or social support.



Photos: Children with FAS
Source: NIAAA



Photo: Adult with FAS
Source: <http://come-over.to/FASCRC/>

If you are pregnant, or could become pregnant, don't drink alcohol.

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