

Is it okay to drink alcohol if I am trying to get pregnant?

It is best to stop drinking alcohol when you start trying to get pregnant because many women become pregnant and do not know it right away. It may be up to 4 to 6 weeks before you know for sure that you are pregnant. This means you might be drinking and exposing your developing baby to alcohol without meaning to.

What can I do to help myself stop drinking alcohol?

Ask your health care provider for help. Together, you can develop a plan for you to quit drinking.

What can I say to people who offer me alcohol or expect me to drink?

- “No thanks, I’m pregnant and I’ll pass.”
- “I’ll have water.”
- Or just say, “No thanks,” and change the subject.

How can I stay social without drinking?

You can hang out with people who will help you not to drink alcohol. Ask them if they would not drink alcohol around you. You can avoid risky places and situations such as bars and clubs. At parties, stay away from the drink table. Stick with people who aren’t drinking.

What else can help me not drink alcohol?

- If you smoke, quit. Cigarettes increase your craving to drink and are dangerous for your developing baby.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Get some exercise: take a walk, dance, go for a swim.
- Keep stress away: take a long bath, meditate, or take some deep breaths.
- Be proud of yourself for doing all you can to have a healthy baby!

For More Information

The following organizations can provide you with more information about FASDs and alcohol use during pregnancy:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

www.cdc.gov/fasd or call 800–CDC–INFO

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) FASD Center for Excellence

www.fasdcenter.samhsa.gov

If you are pregnant or trying to get pregnant and cannot stop drinking alcohol, the following organizations and resources can help:

National Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (NOFAS)

www.nofas.org or call 800–66–NOFAS (66327)

Substance Abuse Treatment Facility Locator

www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov or call 800–622–HELP (4357)

Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level: 6.6

Approved January 2015.

This page may be reproduced for noncommercial use by health care professionals to share with clients. Any other reproduction is subject to the Journal of Midwifery & Women’s Health’s approval. The information and recommendations appearing on this page are appropriate in most instances, but they are not a substitute for medical diagnosis. For specific information concerning your personal medical condition, the Journal of Midwifery & Women’s Health suggests that you consult your health care provider.