

## QUICK FACTS

- Substance use is the use of alcohol, drugs, prescription medications, or other substances to alter the state of a person's mind and body. The substances can be either legal or illegal.
- Substance use can have a serious and harmful impact on a person's lifestyle and health. For this reason, it's important to never take substance use lightly.
- Using substances during pregnancy can have very harmful effects on both the person who is pregnant and the baby.

## PREGNANCY AND ALCOHOL

- There is no safe amount of alcohol that a person can use during pregnancy or while trying to get pregnant. All types of alcohol are equally dangerous during pregnancy, whether it's beer, wine, or liquor.
- If a person is drinking alcohol during pregnancy, it is never too late to stop. Stopping drinking improves the baby's health and well-being.
- When a person who is pregnant drinks alcohol, it passes to the baby. It can cause:
  - Miscarriage.
  - Stillbirth.
  - Birth abnormalities.
  - Fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASDs), which are the leading cause of preventable intellectual disability in the US.
- FASDs are lifelong physical, behavioral, and intellectual disabilities, including but not limited to:
  - Abnormal facial features.
  - Small head size.
  - Low body weight.
  - Shorter-than-average height.
  - Poor coordination.
  - Hyperactive behavior.
  - Difficulty concentrating or paying attention.
  - Poor memory.
  - Learning disabilities.
  - Speech and language delays.
  - Intellectual disabilities.
  - Poor reasoning and judgment skills.
  - Problems with sleeping and eating, as a baby.
  - Problems with vision and hearing.
  - Problems with the heart, kidney, or bones.

## PREGNANCY AND OPIOIDS

- Between 1999 and 2014, opioid use disorder among pregnant people quadrupled, according to the CDC.
- Using opioids during pregnancy has been linked to several health problems, including birth defects, preterm birth, stillbirth, maternal mortality, and neonatal opioid withdrawal syndrome.
- If you are pregnant and using opioid pain medications, talk to your doctor before starting or stopping. Your doctor will help you understand all of the risks so that you can make the safest choice for you and your pregnancy.

## PREGNANCY AND TOBACCO

- Smoking cigarettes during pregnancy can harm the developing baby and cause preterm birth, fetal growth restriction, low birth weight, stillbirth, birth defects of the mouth and lip, damage to developing brains and lungs, or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in childhood.
- It can also increase the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).
- All tobacco products are unsafe during pregnancy, including e-cigarettes.
- If you are pregnant or trying to get pregnant, and cannot stop smoking, please get help as soon as you can.

## PREGNANCY AND MARIJUANA

- Marijuana use during pregnancy has been linked to:
  - Low birth weight.
  - Preterm birth weight.
  - Stillbirth.
  - Developmental issues for the child, such as problems with attention and learning.
- People who use marijuana during pregnancy are more likely to use other substances that can harm infant health or cause developmental problems in adolescence.
- If you are pregnant or trying to get pregnant, and can't stop using marijuana, please get help as soon as you can.

## PREGNANCY AND COCAINE

- Using cocaine during pregnancy can harm both the baby and the person who is pregnant.
- Cocaine use can cause maternal hypertension and placental abruption in the person who is pregnant.
- It can also cause low birth weight, restricted fetal growth, and premature birth in the baby.
- If you are pregnant or trying to get pregnant, and can't stop using cocaine, please get help as soon as you can.



## TAKE ACTION

If you or someone you love is using substances during pregnancy, or while trying to get pregnant, the sooner you address the issue, the better the outcome.

It's always best to quit using substances before pregnancy or as early as possible, but it is never too late to quit. Speak to your doctor for help. They can give you advice, support you as you try to quit, and connect you with other resources.

- Reach out to your primary care physician, your obstetrician, or a mental health professional.
- Remember that early intervention is always best for you, your loved one, and your baby's health and well-being.

**Call 910-862-6900 today to speak to someone who can help.**

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