

A Pregnant Woman Never Drinks Alone:

Have a **healthy** baby. Be an **alcohol-free** mother-to-be.

Drinking alcohol during pregnancy can cause permanent damage to the developing fetus called Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD). FASD is the leading known cause of preventable mental retardation. People with FASD will experience a range of physical, mental, behavioral and emotional problems.

When a pregnant woman drinks alcohol, her baby does too. There is no known amount of alcohol that is safe to drink while pregnant. Even low levels of alcohol can cause lifelong problems.

Individuals with FASD also can develop memory and learning problems, have difficulties in school, suffer from chronic health issues, mental illness, addiction and are also at high risk of experiencing unemployment, homelessness and trouble with the law.

There is no cure for FASD. It lasts a lifetime.

You can prevent FASD

- If you are planning a pregnancy, stop drinking alcohol now.
- Stop drinking right away if you think you may be pregnant. Do not wait until you are sure.
- Binge drinking (drinking a lot of alcohol in a short period of time) is particularly harmful and must be avoided during pregnancy.
- If you drink and are sexually active, use birth control.

Help is available. Talk to your doctor, community health nurse, or health care provider if you need help to stop drinking.

You don't have to be a heavy drinker to have a baby affected by alcohol. If a pregnant woman drinks alcohol, it passes directly from her bloodstream to the placenta of the developing fetus. Any type of alcohol (beer, wine and spirits) can cause FASD.

FASD is 100 percent preventable. Yet, approximately 40,000 infants are born each year in the United States affected by prenatal alcohol use, with a cost to society of more than \$5.4 billion annually.

For more information on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, contact:

NYS Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services

General Information: 518-473-3460

www.oasas.state.ny.us/fasd

National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, www.nydas.org

Pregnancy Risk Network/NYS Teratology Information Service

Toll Free: 1-800-724-2454

Source: Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders

www.fascenter.samhsa.gov