



FOETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDERS (FASD) FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q	What is FASD?
A	Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) is a group of conditions that occur when an unborn baby is exposed to any amount of alcohol before birth.
Q	How is FASD prevented?
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• FASD is prevented if the mother does not drink any alcohol during pregnancy.• FASD is 100% preventable. No alcohol for mom during pregnancy equals no FASD for baby.• FASD is 100% permanent. The damage done by alcohol cannot be undone.
Q	How does alcohol harm an unborn baby?
A	When a pregnant woman drinks alcohol, it goes into her bloodstream. The blood takes alcohol to the unborn baby. Alcohol damages the unborn baby's growing body and brain, resulting in many types of birth defects. Alcohol harms an unborn baby in different ways at different times during the pregnancy.
Q	Will it make a difference if a pregnant woman stops drinking anytime during the pregnancy?
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It is best to stop drinking alcohol when you are planning to have a baby.• Alcohol harms an unborn baby in different ways, at different times during pregnancy.• If you stop drinking alcohol at any stage, it will stop further damage to the unborn baby.
Q	Will the baby get FASD if the mother does not drink alcohol?
A	The baby will not get FASD if the mother does not drink alcohol.
Q	Will alcohol harm the baby?
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No amount of alcohol is safe for the unborn baby.• Alcohol can cause damage to the unborn baby even before a woman knows she is pregnant.• Alcohol can continue harming the baby until the baby is born.• It is never too late to stop drinking during pregnancy.

Q	Will the baby be affected if the mother drinks alcohol when she is breastfeeding?
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The alcohol the mother drinks is carried through the breast milk to the baby when the mother is breastfeeding. The breastmilk can smell and taste of alcohol and babies can stop breastfeeding because they do not like the taste, which means the baby may not grow as it should for its age. • Do not drink alcohol if you are breastfeeding your baby or feeding your baby breast milk. • Drinking alcohol or beverages containing alcohol when breastfeeding can harm the brain, sleep, learning, development and growth of the baby.
Q	Can all types of alcohol harm the baby?
A	Yes, any type of alcohol can cause birth defects. Beer, wine, ciders, spirits, alcoholic spirit coolers, shandy, milk stout, vodka, gin, brandy, whisky, sherry – all types of alcohol can do harm.
Q	Where do you go if you are worried your baby/child has FASD?
A	Go to your nearest clinic and ask that your child be tested.
Q	Who can say if a child has FASD?
A	Only a specially trained doctor, using sophisticated tests, can determine if a child has FASD.
Q	What is the role of a pregnant woman's partner?
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage her not to drink alcohol. • Encourage her to go for help if she cannot stop drinking. • Respect her wish when she decides not to drink. • Help the pregnant woman enjoy alcohol free activities. • Remove all alcohol from your house. • Show solidarity! Give up alcohol for 9 months. • Celebrate special occasions without alcohol. • Planning a baby? Ban alcohol.
Q	Where do I go for help?
A	<p>If you need help controlling your alcohol intake, drug misuse and smoking then speak to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff at your nearest clinic or City substance abuse treatment site • Local community structures e.g. women's groups • Narcotics Anonymous or Alcoholics Anonymous • Social worker • Places of worship • A religious leader <p>Don't go it alone. Seek help. Speak to someone you trust.</p>

Q	Do FASD babies develop like normal babies?
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A FASD baby can be born early (before their due date). • These babies have a low birth weight and are weak and sickly. • They are slow in reaching milestones e.g. sitting, walking, and talking.
Q	How does a child with FASD cope at school?
A	<p>A child with FASD does not cope well at school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They find it difficult to concentrate and have to be taught the same skills many times. • They have difficulty knowing right from wrong. • They may also experience difficulties with poor coordination, problem solving and memory. <p>It is important to have a child assessed early so that he/she can receive the necessary help and assistance. FASD children will have physical and intellectual problems their entire lives.</p>
Q	What is International FASD Day?
A	FASD Day is Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Day, which is observed globally every year on 9 September.
Q	Why are bells rung at 09:09 on 9 September?
A	Annually at 09:09 on 9 September, people are encouraged to ring bells as part of the international call for each time zone across the world. This is done to create awareness and to focus attention on the fact that any alcohol consumed by a woman during the nine months of pregnancy will affect her unborn baby. You can ring doorbells, cellphones, jingle keys or stamp feet – make a noise to spread the FASD message.
Q	What is the main message for a woman who is planning to fall pregnant?
A	Stop drinking alcohol when you are thinking of falling pregnant. Stop drinking alcohol the minute you think you are pregnant. You can get help if you cannot stop drinking. Speak to your health worker if you choose to drink.
Q	What is the key FASD message?
A	No alcohol during pregnancy means the unborn baby will not have FASD.
Q	Where can I get more information on FASD?
A	You can visit https://www.fasdsa.org/#/screens/d12245cc-1680-458d-89dd-4f0d7fb22724 for more information.