

&ALCOHOL pregnancy

Is it safe to have a drink once in a while?

Take the test to find out:

1. The safest amount of alcohol a pregnant woman can drink is:

- a. None.
- b. Two drinks during the whole pregnancy.
- c. One drink on occasion during the first three months of the pregnancy.
- d. No more than three drinks a month.
- e. One drink a week.

2. If a woman drinks alcohol while pregnant, her baby may experience:

- a. Permanent brain damage.
- b. Birth defects such as organ damage, vision and hearing problems.
- c. Low birth weight and slow growth.
- d. Learning difficulties and behaviour problems.
- e. All of the above.

3. If a woman drinks alcohol while breastfeeding, her baby may experience:

- a. Changes in sleep patterns.
- b. Decrease in milk intake.
- c. Risk of hypoglycaemia (low blood sugar).
- d. a and c.
- e. All of the above.

Answers on the back...





No safe type.
No safe time.
No safe amount.

1. a. None.

There is no safe time during pregnancy to drink any amount of alcohol. A baby's brain develops throughout the whole pregnancy. The safest choice during pregnancy is no alcohol at all. In fact, it is best to stop drinking before you get pregnant.

2. e. All of the above.

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is a term used to describe different disabilities and birth defects in children whose mothers drank alcohol during pregnancy. Effects include brain damage, vision and hearing difficulties, organ damage, learning difficulties, behaviour problems, and slow growth. These disabilities don't go away. FASD is a lifelong problem.

3. e. All of the above.

When a mother drinks alcohol, it passes into her breast milk at concentrations similar to those found in the bloodstream. It takes anywhere from two to three hours per drink for the alcohol to clear from the breast milk (depending on the number of drinks and the woman's body weight and height). If alcohol is present in the breast milk when feeding, the baby may experience changes in sleep patterns, decreased milk intake and development of hypoglycaemia (low blood sugar).

References: Best Start. Be Safe: Have an alcohol-free pregnancy. Centre for Addiction and Mental Health & Motherisk, 2007. Exposure to Psychotropic Medications and Other Substances during Pregnancy and Lactation: A Handbook for Health Care Providers.



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For more information on alcohol or other drugs and pregnancy, talk to your doctor or call the Motherisk Alcohol Helpline at 1-877-327-4636.