

# TAKE THIS QUICK TEST:

How many drinks does it take to make you feel high?

- Less than or equal to 2 drinks (0)  
 More than 2 drinks (1)

Have people annoyed you by criticizing your drinking?

- No (0)  
 Yes (1)

Have you felt you should cut down on your drinking?

- No (0)  
 Yes (1)

Have you ever had a drink first thing in the morning to steady your nerves or to get rid of a hangover?

- No (0)  
 Yes (1)

Total Score: \_\_\_\_\_

If you scored 2 or higher, you may have a problem with alcohol abuse and should contact the Substance Abuse helpline at 0800 121314 or Alcoholics Anonymous 0861 435 722



Stop drinking alcohol if there is a chance that you could get pregnant.

# farr

*No amount of alcohol is safe during pregnancy*

Give your child the future they deserve




## For more information contact us

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# ALCOHOL AND PREGNANCY

Fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) is caused when a pregnant woman drinks alcohol. The alcohol may damage the baby's brain, nervous system and other organs, which can lead to physical, behavioural and intellectual disabilities that last a lifetime. Any woman can have a baby with FASD if she drinks alcohol while pregnant. As most pregnancies (75%) in South Africa are unplanned, many women only find out about their pregnancy when they are already between 12 and 20 weeks pregnant. This means a woman **might be putting her baby at risk of FASD without knowing it.**

## WHAT IS FASD?

FASD refers to a spectrum of disorders that occur in a child when exposed to alcohol during pregnancy.

- **Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS)**  
Most well-known form of FASD. Individuals have physical, behavioural and intellectual symptoms and problems.
- **Partial FAS (pFAS)**  
Individuals have similar symptoms, problems and features as FAS, but to a lesser degree.
- **Alcohol Related Neurodevelopmental Disorder (ARND)**  
Affected individuals have behavioural and intellectual problems but not the physical features.
- **Alcohol Related Birth Defects (ARBD)**  
Affected individuals are born without the physical features, but with damaged organs (i.e. heart defects, eye problems, etc.)

## If you are a woman drinking alcohol, you should:

- **Immediately stop using alcohol** if you are trying to fall pregnant, or if there is a chance that you could fall pregnant.
- **Ask your family, friends and partner to support you** in your decision not to drink alcohol during pregnancy.

“ Any type of alcohol, at any time during pregnancy, can harm your baby.”

### RISKS OF DRINKING DURING PREGNANCY

Miscarriage | Stillbirth  
Prematurity & low birth weight | FASD | Cot death

Anyone can help prevent FASD:

- Encourage women to stop using alcohol if they are planning a pregnancy.
- Encourage women to use contraceptives if they are drinking alcohol.
- Refer women to a professional service provider if they need help to stop drinking.
- Help them to find alternatives to drinking alcohol.



6 to 29%

In different communities of South Africa, a FASD prevalence rate of 6 – 29% has been established. This means that South Africa has the highest prevalence of FASD in the world.

100% PREVENTABLE

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder is 100% preventable.

When a woman drinks alcohol, it takes less than 20 minutes for the alcohol to reach the baby.

20 Min

Someone with FASD can experience a number of problems in his/her lifetime:



### Physical problems:

- Decreased growth (before and after birth)
- Organ damage (heart, kidneys, eyes, ears)
- Characteristic facial features, in some cases
- Brain damage



### Behavioural & intellectual problems:

- Learning disabilities
- Interpersonal relationships problems
- Hyperactivity
- Attention difficulty
- Poor judgement and difficult communicating
- Poor cause-effect reasoning



### Ongoing problems with:

- Establishing healthy boundaries
- Substance abuse
- Social skills
- Person-pleasing (easily taken advantage of)
- Living independently

## WHY TAKE THE RISK?

- If you are sexually active, but not using contraceptives, you could fall pregnant.
- **Any amount** of alcohol you use while you are pregnant could harm your unborn baby.
- **All types** of alcohol can harm your baby, including **beer, wine and ciders.**
- Alcohol travels directly from the mother's blood through the placenta to the baby. It does **not get** diluted. This means that the baby drinks the **same amount** of alcohol that the mother drinks.
- The baby's brain, body and organs develop throughout the pregnancy and can be damaged by alcohol at **any time.**