

## Is there a cure for FAS?

- ◆ There is no cure for FAS.
- ◆ If children with FAS get help early, they may do better.
- ◆ If you think your child has FAS, or if you drank alcohol while you were pregnant, you should talk with your child's doctor as soon as possible.
- ◆ Talk with counselors at your child's school so they can help your child.

## How can I prevent FAS?

- ◆ Do not drink alcohol if you are pregnant or planning to be pregnant.
- ◆ If you think you might be pregnant, stop drinking now.
- ◆ Do not wait until you know for sure that you are pregnant.
- ◆ If you have trouble stopping your drinking, you should use birth control so you do not get pregnant until you can stop drinking.

## What if I need help to stop drinking?

- ◆ Stopping drinking can be very hard. But there are many people who will help you.
- ◆ You can get help from people who know what you are going through.
- ◆ Call Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). The number is in your phone book.
- ◆ There are also many alcohol treatment centers who will help. Give them a call.
- ◆ Even if you have tried to stop drinking before, try again. Don't give up.
- ◆ Use birth control so that you do not get pregnant until you can get your drinking under control.

BE IN THE **KNOW**

For more information about FAS and other ways to make sure you have a healthy baby, contact:

1-800-328-3838 or  
[www.beintheknownj.org](http://www.beintheknownj.org)



For more brochures, call 609-984-3351

Did you know that if you drink alcohol when you are pregnant,



You can hurt your unborn baby

If you are:

- ✓ pregnant now,
- ✓ planning to get pregnant, or
- ✓ having sex, but not using any birth control

Think Before You Drink

## Why is drinking alcohol while I'm pregnant such a bad thing?

- ◆ If you drink alcohol while you are pregnant, you can hurt your baby's brain, heart, kidneys, and other organs.



- ◆ Then your baby could be born with a problem called fetal alcohol syndrome or FAS.
- ◆ Babies born with FAS have faces that do not look "normal".
- ◆ They may be small and not weigh as much

as other babies. This means they are not off to as good a start in life as other babies.

- ◆ Some babies with FAS will have mental retardation.
- ◆ Other babies will have a hard time learning and controlling how they act.
- ◆ These problems do not go away. They last a lifetime.

## What if I'm not planning to have a baby yet?

- ◆ Lots of women do not plan on getting pregnant. But it happens—every day.
- ◆ And most women do not know they are pregnant until they've missed at least one or two periods.
- ◆ Women who drink alcohol and do not use birth control when they have sex may get pregnant and expose their baby to alcohol before they know they are pregnant.

## Is it okay to drink a little during pregnancy, as long as I don't drink hard liquor?

- ◆ No. There is no safe level of alcohol you can drink during pregnancy.
- ◆ A 12-ounce can of beer has the same amount of alcohol as a 4-ounce glass of wine or a 1-ounce shot of straight liquor.
- ◆ Some drinks, like wine coolers or malt or mixed drinks, may have more alcohol in them than a 12-ounce can of beer.
- ◆ The best choice is not to drink at all when you are pregnant.



## I drank before I knew I was pregnant. What should I do now?

- ◆ It is never too late to stop. The sooner you stop drinking, the better it will be for both you and your baby.
- ◆ Make sure you get regular prenatal checkups and tell your doctor or nurse you have been drinking.
- ◆ They can give you tips on what to do. Follow their advice.

## If I drank when I was pregnant, does that mean my baby will have FAS?

- ◆ It is not always easy to tell if a newborn baby has FAS.
- ◆ Alcohol can affect unborn babies in different ways.
- ◆ Even if a baby does not have all the problems of FAS, the baby may be born with other problems if the mother drinks alcohol while she is pregnant.
- ◆ Some babies will have trouble learning or behaving.