

Waiting Room Video Script

Let's Talk About What Everyone Should Know About Alcohol Guidelines

Did you know that 1 in 3 U.S. adults drink in ways that put themselves or others at risk of harm?

US Dietary Guidelines recommend limiting consumption to 1 drink or less in a day for women or 2 drinks or less in a day for men. The guidelines are different for men and women. After drinking the same amount of alcohol, women tend to have higher blood alcohol levels than men. The immediate effects of alcohol usually happen faster and last longer in women than men.

Many people are surprised to learn what counts as a “standard” size drink, and that a glass of wine contains the same amount of alcohol as a shot of liquor.

Research suggests that even drinking within the recommended limits may increase the risk of death from causes such as heart disease and some cancers.

Your health matters. When you come in for your appointment, we will discuss issues that might affect you, such as smoking, exercise, diet, and alcohol use. We do this with all of our patients to help provide the best quality health care we can.

Even if you are not planning to be pregnant, it is important for everyone to know the risks of alcohol use during pregnancy.

What are the risks of drinking alcohol during pregnancy?

Alcohol use during pregnancy increases the risk of miscarriage, stillbirth, preterm birth, and SIDS. It is also the only cause of FASDs, which can result in a range of lifelong behavioral, intellectual, and physical disabilities. FASDs can affect each person in different ways and can range from mild to severe.

It is estimated that 1–5% of U.S. school children may have FASDs. People with FASDs are at high risk for trouble in school, trouble with the law, problems with alcohol and other substances, and mental health disorders including ADHD.

Let's take a look at some common questions about alcohol and pregnancy.

Patients often ask if it's okay to have an occasional drink in the last trimester.

Actually, there is no known safe amount of alcohol use during pregnancy. There is also no safe time during pregnancy to drink. The baby's brain is developing throughout pregnancy and can be affected by exposure to alcohol in any trimester.

Patients also ask about wine assuming it is safer than other types of alcohol.

However, A 5-ounce glass of wine contains the same amount of alcohol as a mixed drink with 1.5 ounces of hard liquor. All types of alcohol can be harmful, including wine, beer, and liquor.

Lastly, patients may assume that because someone they knew drank during pregnancy and their baby was fine, that it means they should expect the same outcome.

What we know is that every pregnancy is different. Some babies may not be affected by alcohol during pregnancy, while others may have lifelong effects. The safest thing to do to protect your baby is to avoid any type of alcohol use throughout your pregnancy.

Bottom line - There is no known safe amount, no safe time, and no safe type of alcohol use during pregnancy.

Help support healthy pregnancies in our community. Encourage women who are pregnant or are considering pregnancy to

- Talk to a doctor about how to make healthy choices during every stage of pregnancy.
- Avoid alcohol while pregnant.
- Seek help from a doctor, addiction specialist, or Alcoholics Anonymous if they need help to stop drinking.

For more information on alcohol and pregnancy, visit the CDC website at www.cdc.gov/fasd.