

# ALCOHOL BREAKDOWN



## 1 WHAT TO KNOW

### ALCOHOL WHAT TO KNOW



#### IMPORTANT NOTES

Alcohol is a teratogen (substance known to cause birth defects).

Compared to any other substance, alcohol causes the most serious neurobehavioral (related to emotions, behaviors, and learning) problems in a developing baby.



All types of alcohol (beer, wine, hard liquor, and mixed drinks) have similar effects.

Combining certain medications with alcohol is very dangerous.

Adapted from "National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, n.d. What is a standard drink?"

#### WHAT'S A "STANDARD DRINK"?

Alcohol intake is measured by "standard drinks." A standard drink = 14 grams of pure alcohol.

The following volumes contain **one standard drink**:



Adding water or ice to a drink does not lessen the amount of alcohol.

**FIRST BREATH CAN HELP**  
NO JUDGMENT. JUST SUPPORT.

Get the free information and support you need to stop or cut down on substance use while pregnant, breastfeeding, and caregiving.

[www.joinfirstbreath.org](http://www.joinfirstbreath.org) | (608) 898-2768 | TEXT "FB" TO 29609

LOOKING FOR SUBSTANCE USE TREATMENT OR RECOVERY SERVICES? CALL 2-1-1 OR (833) 944-4873

## 2 USE DURING PREGNANCY & BREASTFEEDING

### ALCOHOL USE DURING PREGNANCY



#### DID YOU KNOW?



During pregnancy, there is no safe time, amount, or type of alcohol to use. The safest option is to not drink at all.

Alcohol use during pregnancy is the leading preventable cause of disability in the U.S.



Baby will have the same, or higher, blood alcohol content as you do.



The alcohol will stay in your baby's system longer, since the organs that break down alcohol are not fully formed yet.



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#### DRINKING ALCOHOL DURING PREGNANCY CAN CAUSE:

- Miscarriage (loss of pregnancy before 20 weeks)
- Stillbirth (loss of baby after 20 weeks)
- Fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASDs)

#### FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDERS

##### WHAT ARE FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDERS (FASDs)?

Fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASDs) are a range of life-long problems and conditions that can affect a person exposed to alcohol in utero (in the womb).

##### Symptoms can include:

- Abnormal facial features, small head, and low body weight
- Poor coordination
- Problems with attention and memory
- Learning problems, problems understanding things, and low IQ
- Speech and language delays
- Vision or hearing problems
- Problems with baby's heart, kidneys, and bones

There is no cure for FASDs.



### ALCOHOL USE DURING BREASTFEEDING



THERE IS NO SAFE LEVEL OF ALCOHOL FOR A BABY TO DRINK IN YOUR BREAST MILK

(AKA CHEST OR HUMAN MILK)

Alcohol passes through breast milk and is ingested (taken in) by your baby.



After a single standard drink, alcohol will be highest in your breast milk 30-60 minutes after you drink, and will stay in your breast milk for about 3 hours. (The exact amount of time will depend your baby's age and size, your size, how much alcohol you consume, and if you ate.)



"Pumping and dumping" (pumping and then throwing away breast milk) relieves pressure but does not clear the alcohol from your breast milk. The only thing that clears alcohol from your breast milk is time.



Drinking alcohol has not been proven to increase milk supply. In fact, heavier drinking (more than one drink per day) can slow "let down" (milk flow) and milk production as well as affect baby's sleep, growth, and development.



#### KEEPING BABY SAFE

If you drink in small amounts, wait to breastfeed until the alcohol has been cleared from your body.



If you drink to the point of intoxication (you feel "buzzed" or "drunk"), do not feed your baby from the breast. Keep clean, pumped breast milk or another food source, such as formula, on hand. Have a trusted sober adult care for and safely feed baby.

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## 3 IMPACT ON CAREGIVING & YOU

### ALCOHOL IMPACT ON CAREGIVING & YOU



#### ALCOHOL USE CAN:

##### Impair your:



Binge drinking (4 or more drinks within 2 hours for a woman) increases these risks. This can affect your ability to care for your children, respond to their needs, and keep them safe.

Excessive alcohol use can also lead to behaviors that can cause harm to your loved ones.

#### IF YOU USE ALCOHOL:

- Ask a trusted, sober adult to care for your child(ren) while under the influence.
- Do not drive while using alcohol, especially with children in the vehicle.
- Practice safe sleep. Babies are at a higher risk of SIDs – Sudden Infant Death Syndrome – when caregivers use alcohol. Babies should sleep on their backs and in their own crib with no blankets, pillows, toys, or bumpers.

#### ENJOY THE BENEFITS OF STOPPING OR REDUCING ALCOHOL USE:

- Improved immune system and overall health
- No hangovers
- Better memory, focus, and problem solving
- Higher quality sleep
- Better mood and fewer mental health symptoms

#### DID YOU KNOW?



For those living with mental health conditions, alcohol can increase symptoms, interact with medications, and make it hard to control your mood.

If you are concerned about an alcohol use disorder, talk to your health care provider or call the Wisconsin Addiction Recovery Helpline for treatment or recovery services at 2-1-1 or (833) 944-4673. It's OK to reach out for help.



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STANDARD DRINK  
**12 FL OZ REGULAR BEER**

STANDARD DRINK  
**5 FL OZ TABLE WINE**



STANDARD DRINK  
**1.5 FL OZ 80-PROOF SPIRITS**

whiskey, gin, rum, vodka, tequila

STANDARD DRINK  
**8-9 FL OZ MALT LIQUOR**



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# ALCOHOL USE DURING PREGNANCY



## DID YOU KNOW?



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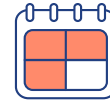
The safest option is to not drink at all.

Alcohol use during pregnancy is the leading preventable cause of disability in the U.S.

Alcohol first passes through the placenta (the organ present at pregnancy that gives baby nutrients), then the umbilical cord (tube connecting placenta to baby), and finally to your baby.



**Baby will have the same, or higher, blood alcohol content as you do.**



**The alcohol will stay in your baby's system longer,** since the organs that break down alcohol are not fully formed yet.

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**There is no cure for FASDs.**

# ALCOHOL USE DURING BREASTFEEDING



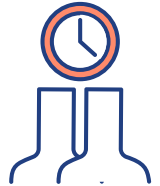
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## IMPACT ON CAREGIVING & YOU



### ALCOHOL USE CAN...

#### Impair your:



Judgment



Reaction Time



Attention

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