



ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, MARIJUANA, COCAINE, & PREGNANCY

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)

Identification of at risk newborns

Suspicion of FAS is based on physical signs, growth retardation, especially of the head, characteristic facial features and evidences of central nervous system dysfunction. Affected newborn infants tend to sleep poorly; be irritable; be hypersensitive to touch, light, and sound; have difficulty establishing routines; and be poor feeders.

Canadian Pediatric Society

Identification of FASD in toddler and preschool children

The older at-risk child will often present with more definite and specific signs: developmental delay, especially of speech, poor growth and behaviour abnormalities. Characteristic behaviour manifestations of FAS include, hyperactivity, poor judgment, inability to appreciate consequences of actions, excessive friendliness, difficulties with sequencing, poor short-term memory and learning difficulties.

Canadian Pediatric Society

Identification of FASD in school-age children

School-aged children will usually be referred because of learning problems, especially in reading and mathematics, or with behaviour abnormalities. This child should be referred for a full work-up.

Canadian Pediatric Society

INCIDENCE RATES
FAS: 1/500
Downs Syndrome: 1/600
Spina Bifida: 1/700

MORE THAN HALF OF WOMEN OF CHILDBEARING AGE DO NOT KNOW WHAT FAS IS.
Kellerman

Women & Alcohol

“When a pregnant woman drinks alcohol in excess of 14.8 ml (1 tablespoon) per day, she places her unborn child at risk for permanent brain damage.” *Dr. Alan Murdock*

50% of women are drinking regularly at the time they get pregnant. JAMA

Women who binge drink during pregnancy (5 or more drinks per occasion) and frequently drink during pregnancy (7 or more drinks per week) are at risk for having children with FAS. *Health Canada*

All women who are seen by primary care physicians should be asked about their drinking habits, whether pregnant or not. *Canadian Pediatric Society*

Tobacco, Marijuana, Cocaine & Pregnancy

Tobacco

Babies of women who smoke have a two to three times higher risk of stillbirth and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

Motherisk

Smoking during pregnancy reduces blood flow in the artery joining the fetus to the placenta causing damage to the placenta and restricting the delivery of essential nutrients, such as insulin-like growth hormones (IGH), which are essential for fetal growth and organ development.

Reuters Health

Marijuana

Prenatal marijuana use could raise the level of miscarriage and stillbirth.

Marijuana: Health Effects

Newborns exposed to cannabis show some of the usual symptoms of neonatal withdrawal; for example, fine tremours and exaggerated startled reflex. Children exposed to cannabis may show sleep disturbed sleep patterns and impaired visual and auditory development. They do not show decreased intelligence, but certain higher level cognitive functions may be affected.

Health Canada

Cocaine

Prenatal cocaine use is associated with increased risk of spontaneous abortions, premature labor, precipitous delivery, lower birth weight and stillbirth. Newborns exposed to opiates show some of the usual symptoms of neonatal withdrawal. The vasoconstricting effect of cocaine is thought to be responsible for the drug's possible adverse effects; however studies produced inconsistent results. The long-term effects involve intelligence, alertness, attention, and fine and gross motor development.

Health Canada

3-4% OF WOMEN ARE USING SUBSTANCES AT "AT-RISK" LEVELS

Health Canada

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