

If You're Pregnant...

Think about your baby's health—don't drink alcohol

- When you're pregnant, your baby drinks what you drink. Alcohol goes into your bloodstream and crosses the placenta.
- Drinking alcohol while you're pregnant may harm your baby's brain, heart, kidneys, and other organs.
- Some unborn babies whose mothers drink alcohol develop fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS).
- Some children whose mothers drank alcohol during pregnancy have mental retardation, behavior and learning problems, and problems growing. These problems are serious and can be long-term.

Stop drinking now

- There is no known safe amount of alcohol when you're pregnant, and there is no safe time to drink if you're pregnant.
- *All* types of alcohol—even wine, wine coolers, and beer—can harm your developing baby.
- Every pregnancy is different. Even if you had a healthy baby before when you were drinking, the baby you're carrying now could be harmed by alcohol.
- The risk of alcohol harming your baby increases as you get older.
- If you're pregnant and drinking, you can still help your baby if you stop now.
- Ask your health care provider for help. Together, you can develop a strategy for you to quit drinking.



Strategies to Stop Drinking

What to say to others who offer you alcohol or expect you to drink

- Pat your tummy and say, "No thanks, I'm thinking about my baby."
- "No thanks, I'm pregnant and I'll pass."
- "I'll have a club soda with lime."
- Or just say, "No thanks," and change the subject.

Staying social without drinking

- Stick around people who will help you to not drink. Ask them if they would not drink around you.
- Avoid risky places and situations. Stay away from bars and clubs. At parties, stay away from the drinks table. Stick with those who aren't drinking.

Other helpful tips...

- If you smoke, quit. Cigarettes increase your craving to drink. Smoking is also dangerous for your developing baby.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Get some exercise: take a walk, dance, go for a swim.
- Keep stress away:
 - Take a long bath
 - Meditate
 - Take some deep breaths
- Be proud of yourself for doing all you can to have a healthy baby.

Adapted from:

How to Have a Healthy Baby: Be an alcohol-free mother-to-be.

<http://www.samhsa.gov>.

Think Before you Drink. <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fas/faspub.htm>.