Health Matters Fact Sheet: PREVENTING FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDERS

When you drink alcohol, so does your baby

✓ If you drink alcohol while you are pregnant, you can hurt your baby’s brain, heart, kidneys, and other organs. This can result in a fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD).

✓ Babies with FASDs may have trouble learning or controlling how they act. They may have a low IQ or develop more slowly than other kids.

1 in 13 women say they drank alcohol while pregnant

1 in 100 children in the US have an FASD

Prevent FASDs - stay alcohol-free while pregnant

Think before you drink

✓ There is no amount of alcohol that is proven to be safe to drink during pregnancy.

✓ Beer and wine are just as harmful as hard liquor.

✓ Alcohol can be harmful at all stages of a pregnancy - even before you know you’re pregnant.

✓ If you have drunk alcohol during your pregnancy, it’s never too late to stop. Talk to your health care provider.

✓ Talk to your health care provider if you are worried about how much you drink, even if you are not pregnant.

✓ Birth control can help you avoid getting pregnant until you are ready.

Ask yourself...

☐ Have I ever felt the need to cut down on my drinking?

☐ Do I get annoyed when people complain about my drinking?

☐ Do I sometimes need to have a drink in the morning when I first get up?

☐ Do I ever feel guilty about my drinking?

If you answered YES to 2 or more of these questions, you may need to limit your drinking.

Find support

There are lots of resources to help you limit or stop drinking alcohol.

✓ Talk to your health care provider about steps you can take to change your drinking habits.

✓ Visit these websites to learn more:
  - Rethinking Drinking (NIAAA)
  rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov
  - Easy-to-Read Drug Facts (NIH)
  www.easyread.drugabuse.gov/alcoholfacts.php

The Association of Reproductive Health Professionals is committed to translating high-quality science into practice through accredited education and training programs for professionals across disciplines and specialties. For more information, contact education@arhp.org or visit www.arhp.org.