

More babies are affected every year with FASD than with Down's Syndrome, Cystic Fibrosis, Spina Bifida and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome combined.

There are no reliable worldwide statistics on FASD, but estimates show that at least 2 in every 1000 live births are affected. Professor Elizabeth Elliot of Sydney states that 1 in every 100 babies are affected in some way.

There is no safe amount or time to drink alcohol while pregnant.

National Health and Medical Research Council guidelines recommend that for women who are pregnant, planning a pregnancy, or breastfeeding **NOT DRINKING** is the safest option.

There is no cure for FASD. The damage is irreversible. However, it is completely preventable.

No alcohol - No Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.

Say "NO" to all alcohol

Especially if pregnant or hoping to be pregnant.

Damage to the foetus may occur at any stage of pregnancy and the first three months are critical.



And finally, a word to Fathers:

There is evidence that alcohol drunk by the father up to three months before conception can also cause birth abnormalities.

It is important that you support your wife's decision to avoid alcohol.

WCTU Drug-Free Lifestyles

Email: drug-free@bigpond.com

Phone: 03 9791 8490



For Baby's Sake

"Think - Don't Drink"



It started with an end-of -year night out. His Mum, Jenny, had a cocktail or two and a couple of glasses of red wine with dinner and a few cruisers to keep her going on the dance floor. After all, it was supposed to be a fun night, and you can't have fun without grog, can you?

Days later, Jenny consulted her doctor and was excited to hear that she and her husband were having a baby. About seven months later Peter was born.

But the baby didn't thrive in the usual way and by the time Peter was about 18 months old the specialist was in no doubt. It was Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).

"FASD? What on earth is that? Alcohol? I am not a drinker," protested Jenny, angry and upset. "Did I catch it from someone? It can't be my fault. I only ever drink at a party."

The specialist explained; "Every pregnancy is different but drinking alcohol on one occasion, Jenny, is sufficient to alter the development of the baby's brain causing Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder that relates to a range of alcohol induced abnormalities".

Peter will never be normal!



A baby with FAS



The same person as a teenager



6-Week Old Baby
"Normal" Brain

6-Week Old Baby
FAS Brain

FASD Damage

A baby suffering from complete or partial FAS will show some of these features:

- ▶ Growth retardation
- ▶ Facial abnormalities (e.g. small head and upturned nose, wide- set eyes, cleft palate, protruding ears)
- ▶ Skeletal abnormalities (e.g. painful joints)
- ▶ Defects in major organs (heart, liver, kidneys, genitals)
- ▶ Central nervous system damage (e.g. mental retardation, poor muscle tone and motor coordination, irritability, poor sucking and swallowing reflexes)

Among other problems, children with FASD may have learning difficulties, find it hard to remember tasks from day to day, have behaviour issues that they have little control over, and find it hard to deal with money. Many have trouble with school and the law and have mental health problems.

Alcohol does more damage to the developing foetus than any other substance