

# #DRYMESTER

HELPING PARENTS-TO-BE GO ALCOHOL FREE



## ALCOHOL AND PREGNANCY?

Many things we hear about pregnancy are passed along through generations. Some people say drinking small amounts of alcohol while pregnant is OK. But the truth is, the only safe option during pregnancy is not to drink alcohol at all. Whether it's beer, wine, or spirits, alcohol can cause harm to your baby at any time during pregnancy.

### KNOW THE **EXPERT ADVICE**

If you're pregnant or planning to become pregnant, the safest approach is **not to drink alcohol at all** to keep risks to your baby to a minimum.

**UK Chief Medical Officers**

The National Institute of Health and Care Excellence (NICE) endorse the Chief Medical Officers' guidelines regarding alcohol use in pregnancy.

## THE RISKS

Whether you are pregnant, thinking about becoming pregnant or know someone who is pregnant, it's important to remember that drinking alcohol while pregnant can put your baby at risk. Some of the risks include miscarriage, the baby being born early, a low birth weight and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).



For helpful tips and advice to go alcohol free during pregnancy, or to support a loved one, find out more at [drymester.org.uk/suffolk](https://drymester.org.uk/suffolk)

# WHAT IS FASD?

## FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER

**A baby's brain and body are growing and developing for the entire nine months of pregnancy. Drinking alcohol during pregnancy can affect how the baby's brain and body develops which can lead to a range of lifelong disabilities.**

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder is the term used to describe this range of lifelong disabilities. There are over 400 known conditions that can include physical, mental, behavioural and learning difficulties. Individuals affected typically have a combination of these conditions and everyone is impacted differently.

## NO TWO BABIES ARE AFFECTED THE SAME WAY BY ALCOHOL

### Some symptoms are noticeable at birth:

Smooth ridge between the upper lip and nose

Small and wide-set eyes

Small head circumference

Facial distinctions – low set ears

Below average height and weight

Thin upper lip

**LESS THAN 10%** of those with FASD will have these recognisable facial features

### Some symptoms become apparent as the baby or child develops:

Learning difficulties

Poor impulse control

Problems with time, money or maths

Problems in social understanding

Problems in memory, attention or judgement

Problems receiving and processing language

Limb damage

Bone formation defects

Brain damage

Heart defects

Kidney damage

FASD is commonly misdiagnosed as other disorders such as ADHD and Autism. People with FASD also have many strengths. Diagnosis and FASD-informed support helps create brighter futures.

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