

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT PREGNANCY & ADDICTION



- The highest risk of developing a substance use disorder for women is between the ages of **18 to 29 years old**.
- The most commonly reported substance used during pregnancy is tobacco, followed by alcohol, cannabis and then other illicit substances.
- The risk of stillbirth increases by **23%** in habitual smokers.
- **5% of women** use one or more addictive substances during pregnancy.
- Every **25 minutes**, a baby is born with neonatal abstinence syndrome, a group of conditions involving infant withdrawal from drugs exposed to while in the womb.

RISKS OF SUBSTANCE USE DURING PREGNANCY

- Behavioral and developmental problems
- Fetal alcohol spectrum disorders
- Low birth weight
- Miscarriage
- Neonatal abstinence syndrome
- Placenta abruption
- Premature birth
- Stillbirth
- Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)

SYMPTOMS OF PRENATAL DRUG EXPOSURE



ALCOHOL

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS), fetal death, birth defects, neurodevelopmental disorders



COCAINE

Miscarriage, stillbirth, small head circumference, low birth weight



MARIJUANA

Premature birth, stillbirth, low birth weight, behavioral and developmental problems



OPIOIDS

Stillbirth, increased risk of SIDS, placental abruption, neonatal abstinence syndrome



STIMULANTS

Stillbirth, placental abruption, miscarriage, brain abnormalities, heart defects



TOBACCO

Stunted growth, increased risk of SIDS, learning and behavioral issues

COMMON REASONS FOR DRUG USE DURING PREGNANCY



AGE

- Childbearing ages (15-44) coincide with a time when new life experiences are sought out, and drug use may begin



INABILITY TO QUIT

- Daily smokers, heavy drinkers and long-term drug abusers find it the hardest to quit, with only 1 in 3 smokers being able to quit in the prenatal period.

POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION

- Struggling to cope with or adapt to lifestyle changes leads an estimated 15% of new mothers to be affected by postpartum depression, increasing their risk of substance abuse.



PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS

- Some of these drugs are highly addictive and, without careful monitoring, the mother may become dependent and cause harm to the baby.

UNPLANNED PREGNANCY

- As nearly half of U.S. pregnancies are unintended or mistimed, women may continue risky alcohol consumption or drug use and inadvertently harm the baby.

CO-OCCURRING DISORDERS

Substance use disorders increase the risk of mental health disorders, and when an individual suffers from both, it is referred to as co-occurring disorders.

The most common mental health disorders for a co-occurring disorder include:



Depression



Eating disorders



Panic disorders



Postpartum depression

