



ALCOHOL-FREE HOLIDAYS FOR BABY AND ME

After all the ups and downs of the last 18 months, and now that vaccines are widely available for everyone ages 5 and over, many of us are excited about the prospect of gathering with our families and friends again for the holiday season!

Many of us have also experienced increases in levels of stress, anxiety, and depression over the last year and a half. If you are or might be pregnant you may feel additional stress and anxiety with questions about how COVID-19 could affect you, your baby, about who can be with you during prenatal visits, labor, and birth, and when you should be vaccinated. Please talk with your healthcare provider to get answers to your questions.

We have also seen reports of increased alcohol use during the pandemic, particularly among women. If you are pregnant or might be pregnant, we have an especially important message this holiday season:

There is no known safe amount, no safe time, and no safe type of alcohol during pregnancy.

* Prenatal alcohol use is associated with an increased risk of miscarriage, stillbirth, prematurity, and sudden infant death syndrome. * A developing baby can be exposed to the same level of alcohol as the mother during pregnancy. * Alcohol can harm a developing baby during the entire 9 months of pregnancy and can result in lifelong attention, behavior, learning and social skills deficits. * These lifelong disabilities are known as fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASDs).

This project is supported by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Cooperative Agreement Number NU84D000006. These contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of CDC, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, or the University of Alaska Anchorage Institute of Social and Economic Research.

TIPS TO STAY ALCOHOL-FREE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

Manage stress in healthy ways

Exercise regularly. Get adequate sleep. Take a few slow deep breaths to calm yourself. Try out meditation apps such as iCalm, Headspace, or many others. Share silly memes and a laugh via text. Stay connected with loved ones with phone or video calls.

Plan ahead for your holiday get-togethers

Share mocktail (non-alcoholic cocktail) recipes with the host in advance of the gathering and/or provide the ingredients. Bring a bottle of non-alcoholic champagne with you. Drink non-alcoholic beverages in wine, cocktail, or champagne glasses to feel festive.

Get support from others

Share what you know about FASDs with your significant other, friends, and family and ask for their support. Ask your partner to stop using alcohol to support you during the pregnancy. *If you are pregnant or trying to get pregnant and cannot stop drinking, there is help available.* Contact your healthcare provider, a local 12-step program, or visit <https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/>.

Everyone can spread the word!

Talk to your friends, daughters, spouses, nieces, granddaughters – any loved one who is pregnant or might be pregnant. Tell them there is no known safe amount, no safe time, and no safe type of alcohol during pregnancy. Help them have an alcohol-free pregnancy.

Resources for more information

Five Things You Should Know about Drinking Alcohol during Pregnancy - www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/women.html.

