

# Tobacco, Alcohol and Drugs/Medicines



## Things You Should Know

1. Tobacco is smoked in cigarettes, cigars and pipes. Secondhand smoke is tobacco smoke in the air.
2. Snuff is a form of smokeless or spit tobacco that is chewed, sniffed or "dipped."
3. Alcohol use includes drinking liquor, mixed drinks, beer, wines, and wine coolers. The alcohol content in 12 ounces of beer is the same as that in 5 ounces of wine or in 1 ounce of hard liquor.
4. Street (illegal) drugs have many names and forms, and are used in different ways. Examples are cocaine/crack, heroin, meth, marijuana, and LSD.
5. Common household products, such as cleaning fluids, aerosol (spray) cans, and glues, can be harmful drugs if they are sniffed, inhaled, or drunk.
6. Medicines (both those prescribed by a health care provider and store-bought drugs, such as sleeping, pain, and diet pills) also can be harmful drugs when not used as directed.



## Tobacco

1. Quitting smoking early in pregnancy is best, but quitting at any time will help you and your baby. It is never too late to quit during pregnancy.
2. Quitting smoking during pregnancy:
  - Gives your baby more oxygen
  - Lowers the risk that your baby will be born too early
  - Increases your chances of having a normal weight, healthy baby
3. Exposure to secondhand smoke causes premature death and disease in children and adults who do not smoke.
  - If you are pregnant and don't smoke, but people smoke around you, your baby can be born too small to be healthy
  - Children exposed to secondhand smoke are at greater risk for colds, pneumonia, ear infections and asthma
  - There is no safe level of secondhand smoke



## Alcohol

The Surgeon General has recommended that women should not drink if they are pregnant or might become pregnant. There is no safe amount, no safe time, and no safe type of alcohol during pregnancy.



Drinking alcohol during pregnancy can result in your baby having Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS). Problems caused by FAS are lifelong, but are 100% preventable.

## Drugs/Medicines

1. Using street drugs even once can harm your body and brain and possibly kill you.
2. Sniffing, inhaling, or drinking common household cleaning products even once also can be fatal.
3. Using medicines other than as directed by your health care provider can be harmful or fatal.



## Things You Can Do

1. If you are pregnant or might become pregnant, do not use alcohol, tobacco or other drugs. Check with your health care provider before using any medicine.
2. If you are breastfeeding, the use of tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs, including some medicines may pass through your breast milk and possibly hurt your baby.
3. Set a good example for your children by not using tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs.
4. Sit with your children in non-smoking areas in restaurants and other buildings.
5. Make "no smoking" a rule inside your home and car for family and friends.

## Tips for Quitting

1. Cutting down or stopping your use of tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs is best. Your local WIC clinic can tell you where to get help.
2. Ask your family and friends to support your decision not to use tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs.
3. Call the Missouri Tobacco Quitline toll-free at 1-800-QUITNOW (1-800-784-8669) for free materials and information.

This handout was developed in collaboration with the Bureau of Genetics and Healthy Childhood.

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