

Link to the infographic:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1QJn4QKv6oVIHQaLtjzUR-4-TWDzYe5wi/preview>

**Vanguard Behavioral Health** provided this infographic.

<https://vanguardbehavioral.com/>

*Text-only version by SoberCourage, sobercourage.com*

# 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 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.
- Five percent 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.

## SYMPTOMS OF PRENATAL DRUG EXPOSURE 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, increase 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 times 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 disorder.

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

- Depression
- Eating disorders
- Panic disorders
- Postpartum depression

### Sources:

1. [vertavahealth.com/addiction-resources/pregnancy](http://vertavahealth.com/addiction-resources/pregnancy)
2. [addictionresource.com/guides/drug-use-during-pregnancy](http://addictionresource.com/guides/drug-use-during-pregnancy)
3. [ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books](http://ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books)
4. [addictionresource.com/guides/drug-use-during-pregnancy](http://addictionresource.com/guides/drug-use-during-pregnancy)
5. [nida.nih.gov/publications/research-reports/substance-use-inwomen/substance-use-while-pregnant-breastfeeding](http://nida.nih.gov/publications/research-reports/substance-use-inwomen/substance-use-while-pregnant-breastfeeding)