

Polysubstance Use and Pregnancy



Information for Service Providers

Here are some examples of what you might share with women who are interested in learning more about tobacco, cannabis, and opioids during pregnancy.

TOBACCO

“When a woman smokes or uses tobacco during pregnancy, the nicotine, carbon monoxide, and other chemicals that enter her blood stream pass into the fetus. This keeps the baby from getting the food and oxygen it needs to grow.”

“Tobacco use during pregnancy can have life-long effects on your baby, including learning difficulties, behavior issues, lung diseases, and increased chance of certain birth defects such as cleft lip or cleft palate.

“Smoking during pregnancy also increases the risks of premature birth, stillbirth and having a low-birth-weight baby. Pre-term and low birth weight babies are more likely to have health problems or disabilities as they grow.”

“Quitting tobacco can be hard but it has benefits that begin right away and last forever. It’s never too late to quit.”

CANNABIS

“Using cannabis while pregnant may affect the fetus. Until more is known about the short- and long-term effects of cannabis on fetuses, babies and young children, it is **safest to avoid using cannabis while pregnant, while breastfeeding, and around children.**”

“If you are using cannabis for medical reasons, talk to your health care provider about whether the benefits of using cannabis for medical purposes outweigh the potential risks to you and your fetus.”

OPIOIDS

“Taking opioids during pregnancy can increase the chance that your baby will be born too early, be born at a low birth weight or experience symptoms of withdrawal from the medications you are taking.”

“If your baby experiences symptoms of withdrawal, he or she will need medical observation and possibly treatment. Not all babies will experience withdrawal and not all require medical treatment for it.”

“Most babies who experience symptoms of withdrawal will have no long-term effects on their health and development.”



The Prevention Conversation

It's time to talk about alcohol and pregnancy