

**Tip 5: Avoid harmful substances during pregnancy, such as alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.**

What is healthy for you is healthy for your baby. Substance use ([alcohol](#), drugs, [cigarettes](#), [marijuana](#), [e-cigarettes/vaping](#) etc.) and/or substance misuse (taking medications differently than prescribed) can be harmful to a pregnancy and infants who are breastfeeding.\* The best way to keep yourself, your pregnancy, and your baby healthy is to avoid substance use. Take prescription and over the counter medications only as directed while trying to get pregnant, throughout pregnancy, and while breastfeeding. If you are already pregnant, it is not too late to get help. Talk to your healthcare provider about getting the support you need.



It is important to discuss all medication and substance use with your healthcare providers. They will be able to help you access supports like medication assisted treatment, psychotherapy, or peer and community support. Abruptly stopping substances might cause withdrawal symptoms and harm to you and your baby. You do not need to go through this process alone. Obstetricians and Gynecologists and other health professionals can provide medical help, guidance and support. For help when it's needed, call or text the National Maternal Mental Health Hotline 1-833-9-HELP4MOMS(1-833-943-5746). TTY Users can use a preferred relay service or dial 711 and then 1-833-943-5746. You can also search for behavioral health providers on the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) [website](#).

For additional local resources, please refer to your state/county health department.

\*If you would like more information on substance use and adverse pregnancy and birth outcomes, please refer to the table below.

How can substance use disorder affect my pregnancy?	
Below is a list of potential complications that can happen if there is a substance use / misuse disorder.	
There is no known safe 'level' or amounts for use in a pregnancy. However, there are also reports of babies who are born without serious health problems. You can help to improve outcomes just by talking to your healthcare providers about your exposures.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Infertility</li><li>• Miscarriage</li><li>• Birth defects</li><li>• Poor growth</li><li>• Preterm delivery</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Low birth weight</li><li>• Stillbirth</li><li>• SIDS</li><li>• Withdrawal symptoms / neonatal abstinence syndrome</li><li>• Learning problems / developmental delay</li></ul>
Talk with a healthcare provider and MotherToBaby to learn more about your specific exposures.	