



# Substance use during pregnancy: what you need to know

Seeing a care provider should always feel safe. But if you struggle with alcohol, drug or cigarette use, you might be worried about the impact on your baby. Your care provider is on your team and can help you create a plan for managing your substance use.

By getting help as soon as you find out you're pregnant, you can begin to build a healthy life for you and your baby. Learn how prenatal appointments can help you manage substance use to keep you and your baby together and safe.

### When at your prenatal appointment, you might talk about:

- Your use history and any withdrawal symptoms you've had.
- Physical side effects of using.
- How to use less (and openly talk about relapse).
- Long-term plans to handle withdrawal symptoms and cravings.
- Whether you feel safe at home.
- Keeping your baby at the hospital after birth for monitoring.
- Medications that can help you manage use and are safe for you and your baby.

Talk to your care provider about how you can safely work toward decreasing your use. This may include medication-assisted treatments and counseling.

Smoking	Alcohol	Drug use
<p><b>When you smoke less or quit, your baby will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get more oxygen.</li> <li>• Have less developmental risks.</li> <li>• Be less likely to be born too early.</li> <li>• Be less at risk for illness.</li> </ul>	<p><b>When you drink less or quit, your baby will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have better attention later in life.</li> <li>• Be less likely to have a learning disability.</li> <li>• Be less likely to have speech difficulty.</li> <li>• Have a healthier heart and kidneys.</li> </ul>	<p><b>When you use less or quit, your baby will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be less likely to arrive early.</li> <li>• Be more likely to eat and grow well.</li> <li>• Be less likely to have developmental disabilities.</li> <li>• Be less likely to suffer from withdrawal.</li> </ul>

### There are many resources to help you make a change.

- Talk with your care provider.
- If you are a UnitedHealthcare Community Plan member, call the Healthy First Steps Helpline, 1-800-599-5985, Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. local time.\*
- Call the Substance Use Disorder Helpline toll-free at 1-855-780-5955, available 24/7.
- Visit [liveandworkwell.com/recovery](https://liveandworkwell.com/recovery) to use live chat, available 24/7.

In light of COVID-19, remember to practice social distancing at your prenatal and postpartum appointments. Wash your hands often and wear a mask. Contact your care provider with any concerns.

\*Healthy First Steps is only available in certain states. For all other states, please call the number on your insurance card for help.