

Pregnancy, The Other Drug Rehab

Drugs can damage the development of a baby, and can cause complications during pregnancy. Certain drugs can cause nutritional deficiencies, anemia, and fetal growth retardation. The use of drugs while pregnant can also increase the chance of developing toxemia or pre-eclampsia. Marijuana use during pregnancy can cause attention deficit, memory problems and impaired decision making skills. These problems usually don't appear until age 3. The use of amphetamines is associated with an increase in cardiovascular defects in babies. Barbiturate use during pregnancy may be linked to birth defects, withdrawals, poor feeding, and seizures. Opioids are associated with abnormalities and complications during pregnancy. There is a high risk for premature labor, intrauterine growth retardation and pre-eclampsia, in women who use opioids while pregnant. Cocaine use by the mother-to-be can increase the risk of miscarriage. Babies born to mothers who used cocaine during pregnancy can have lower IQ scores and mental deficiencies. Sudden infant death syndrome is more common in babies born to mothers who used cocaine. The use of PCP during pregnancy is believed to cause abnormal development in babies. It can cause the mother to have mental illness and loose contact with reality.

If you smoke cigarettes, and are pregnant or plan to be pregnant you should definitely consider stopping the habit. When you inhale tobacco smoke you are inhaling substances that are harmful to you and your growing baby. These substances include nicotine, carbon monoxide, hydrogen cyanide, tars, resins and other cancer causing agents. These harmful chemicals are passed through the placenta to the baby when inhaled by the mother to be.

Smoking has a number of harmful effects on babies such as, a low birth weight, lower IQ scores, reading disorders, and hyperactivity. Smoking has also been known to interfere with the baby's absorption of vitamins B and C and folic acid, which are all important to the growth and development of the baby. There is a risk of developing placental abruption during pregnancy that increases to 25% in women who are moderate smokers, and 65% in women who smoke heavily. Smoking during pregnancy also increases the risk of miscarriage, death of the baby while still in the mother, or shortly after birth. The risk of placenta previa is 25% more likely to happen in women who smoke moderately, and 90% more likely in women who smoke heavily.

Drinking alcohol while pregnant is also not a good idea. There are very serious risks involved with drinking alcohol and being pregnant. Even a little amount of alcohol can increase the risk of having a miscarriage. Large amounts of alcohol can result in abnormalities of the baby. Chronic alcohol use can lead to fetal alcohol syndrome, FAS, which is when the fetus develops abnormally.

Fetal alcohol syndrome refers to growth retardation before and after the child's birth. This can mean heart and limb defects and unusual facial characteristics. Children born with FAS can also have behavioral problems, impaired speech, and impaired muscle and joint use.

Abnormalities in babies have been associated with as little as two drinks a day. It is best to avoid alcohol altogether, so that you do not put your baby at risk of having fetal alcohol syndrome. Some over the counter cold medicines contain alcohol, so make sure to read labels before use of all medications.

Not only does the mother need to avoid alcohol, but it is also a good idea for the father to not drink also. Research suggests that large amounts of alcohol consumed by the father may cause the baby to be born with FAS. Alcohol consumption by the father has also been known to cause intrauterine growth retardation.

Not only can illegal drugs have harmful effects on babies, but legal drugs and medications can have harmful effects on babies also. You should stop all use of medications until you discuss the medicines with your doctor to find out if they are safe to use while pregnant. The best way to prevent any of these harmful effects on your baby is to stop all drug use before and during pregnancy. The next time you consider getting "high", having a drink, or lighting up, think of how it would feel if your baby is born with abnormalities, and you single handedly could have prevented these hardships for your baby.

About the Author

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