

Keep you & your children safe

You & your child can get hurt from alcohol, tobacco, & other drugs.

Tips for staying safe:

Pregnancy

- **Tobacco or e-cigarettes:** Quitting smoking early in pregnancy is best, but quitting at any time will help you and your baby. By quitting, you will help your baby get more food and oxygen, grow better, and be born alive and healthy. E-cigarettes are also not safe to use while pregnant.
- **Alcohol:** There is no safe amount, no safe time, and no safe type of alcohol during pregnancy. By avoiding alcohol you can help prevent health issues such as Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder for your child in the future. It is never too late to stop.
- **Other drugs:** Don't take medications (prescription or over-the-counter) without talking to your doctor first. Some drugs can cause birth defects. If you are using street drugs, when pregnant, it can cause serious health complications. Talk to your doctor to get help.

Breastfeeding

- **Tobacco or e-cigarettes:** Mothers who are using tobacco or e-cigarettes can breastfeed their babies. Breastmilk may help protect your baby from the harmful effects of secondhand smoke. It is still better to quit. If you smoke, try to smoke outside, right after you breastfeed. Nicotine levels will decrease before it is time to breastfeed again.
- **Alcohol:** If you drink alcohol it can be passed into your breastmilk. Excessive alcohol consumption while breastfeeding could affect the baby's sleep patterns and development. Talk to your health care provider or lactation consultant if you have questions about consuming alcohol when breastfeeding.
- **Other drugs:** If you take other drugs (even over-the-counter or prescription drugs) ask your doctor before breastfeeding.

If you have questions about whether it is safe to breastfeed, ask your doctor as soon as possible. Continue to pump regularly but wait to give your baby the milk until you know it is safe.

Postpartum moms, Parents, & Caregivers

Reduced substance use can be better for you and your child's health.

- Trying to reduce your child's exposure to second hand smoke could help them have less colds, ear infections, and risk of asthma. Also, less exposure to tobacco smoke, for you and your child, could reduce your risk of cancer, heart disease, and stroke. Smoking outside, instead of in the house or car, is better for others around.
- By avoiding substance abuse you will be more responsive and able to adapt to your child's needs. It is safer and easier for you to work, be responsible at home, and drive. You may also be able to live a healthier life. Substance use can hurt your body and cause health problems like heart attacks, liver disease, kidney disease, lung disease, and more. Take care of your body and live your best life for both you and your child.

It is never too late. Ask for help.

If substance abuse is something you or someone you know struggles with:

- Talk to your doctor for help and referrals.
- Find a substance abuse facility near you. Visit <https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/> or call 1-800-662-HELP (1-800-662-4357).
- For help quitting smoking call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) or sign up to get stop-smoking text messages at <http://smokefree.gov/smokefreetxt/>.
- For help quitting drinking or drugs call 1-800-NCA-CALL (1-800-622-2255).

Adapted from : Missouri WIC and Nutrition Services, Montana WIC
Resources: cdc.gov, easyread.drugabuse.gov
Photo credit: istockphoto

Be the kind of parent you want to be.
Protect your children by asking for help.



Substance abuse is when you feel a strong urge to keep taking a substance (like tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs) even if it is causing harm. Not everyone who uses will become addicted, but anyone can become addicted. To stop, ask for help. If you do become addicted, you can be treated and you can recover.