

FOR BABY'S SAKE

**PREVENT BIRTH
DEFECTS**

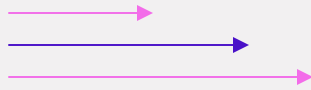
CARESS

West Virginia Department of Health and Human
Resources

Office of Maternal Child and Family Health

Bureau for Public Health

For Baby's Sake
Prevent Birth
Defects



CARESS

Congenital Abnormalities Registry, Education and Surveillance System

What is a Congenital Abnormality

- It is a condition that occurs during the baby's development. It could affect how the body looks, works or both. It may be found during pregnancy, at birth or a few years after birth.

How can it be recognized

- Some are easily recognized, while others can only be identified by specialized testing. The abnormality can range from mild to severe, even ending in death.

Neural Tube Defects

- Birth defects that affect the brain or spine
- Most common are Spina Bifida and Anencephaly
- Develop between the 17th and 30th day after conception
- Occur when the neural tube does not close properly

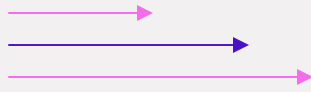
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Spina Bifida

- Occurs when lower end of neural tube fails to close
- Spinal cord and backbones do not develop properly

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Anencephaly

- Fatal condition
- Brain does not develop completely or is entirely absent
- Statistics WV

Congenital Heart Defects

- At least 8 out of every 1000 infants born a year have a heart defect
- Means inborn or existing at birth
- Heart or blood vessels near the heart do not develop normally
- Some may not be detected until childhood

Prevention Before Pregnancy

- Many birth defects occur before a woman even realizes she is pregnant. Since almost half of all pregnancies are unplanned, birth defects prevention measures should be in place at all times to ensure a healthy pregnancy.

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Prevent Birth Defects

A dark blue rectangular box in the top left corner contains the text "For Baby's Sake" and "Prevent Birth Defects". Three horizontal arrows (two pink, one blue) point from the right side of the box towards the title "Folic Acid". Three vertical arrows (two pink, one blue) point downwards from the bottom of the box towards the list of bullet points.

Folic Acid

- This is essential for all ages. It helps forms and repair the cells in the body. It is especially important for women who may become pregnant.
- Folic acid helps form the baby's spinal cord and brain.

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Sources Of Folic Acid

Cereal
(Fortified
with folic
Acid)

Broccoli

Orange Juice

Peanuts

Spinach

Enriched pasta
& rice

Cooked Liver

Green, leafy vegetables

Legumes,
any type
of bean



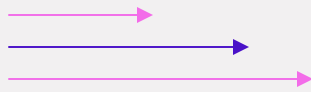
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Folic Acid Statistics

- Currently one 1 in 3 women take a multivitamin with folic acid
- Can prevent 50% - 70% of all Neural Tube Defects

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Risk Factors

- Not taking folic acid
- Smoking
- Drinking
- Drugs
- Harmful chemicals
- Diabetes

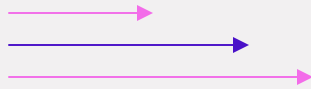


Smoking



- **Increases risk of miscarriages**
- **Increases premature labor**
- **Can cause low-birth weight babies**
- **Impairs growth, emotional development,**
- **Reduces flow of oxygen and nutrients to fetus**

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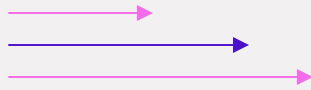


Obesity

- Obese women can develop gestational diabetes, high blood pressure and cardiovascular disease
- Metabolic diseases
- Increase chances of certain defects, such as omphalocele (intestines protruding through naval)



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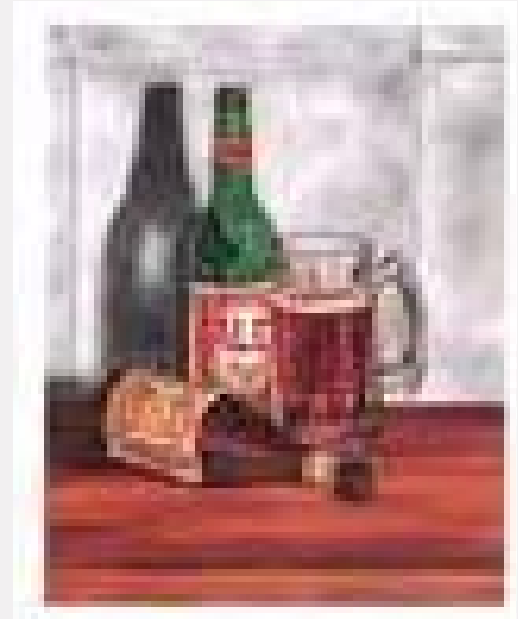


Alcohol

“But just a few drinks won't hurt me.”

Don't believe this.

Even one drink can affect an unborn child. A pregnant woman must realize if she has one drink, her unborn child has one drink.



What is Fetal Alcohol Syndrome?

- A term used to describe a range of permanent mental and physical birth defects caused by drinking during pregnancy.



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Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

- Mental Retardation
- Delayed physical and mental development
- Behavioral, reasoning and learning difficulties
- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder
- Hearing loss

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Symptoms of FAS

- Nervous system damage
- Growth delay
- Abnormal facial features
- Accurate information that the child's mother drank during pregnancy

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For A Health Baby

- See Doctor Before Getting Pregnancy
- Control Medical Concerns (Obesity, Diabetes)
- Don't Smoke
- Don't Drink
- Don't Take Illegal Drugs
- Take 400 mg Folic Acid Daily