

Ask CDC

Alcohol and Pregnancy Don't Mix

[Announcer] This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC – safer, healthier people.

Welcome to *Ask CDC*, the weekly podcast that answers *your* questions. I'm your host, Susan Laird.

Our question this week is from a woman who wants to be a grandmother, but she's worried because her newly-married daughter drinks beer and wine.

It's important that her daughter stop drinking alcohol if she plans to become pregnant. Women who drink alcohol during pregnancy are at risk for having a child with a fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, or FASD.

FASDs are among the top preventable birth defects and developmental disabilities. FASDs can cause problems in how a person grows, learns, looks, and acts, and can also cause birth defects of the heart, brain, and other major organs.

People with FASDs may have difficulties with learning, memory, attention span, problem solving, speech, and hearing. They can also have problems in school and problems getting along with others. FASDs are irreversible, lifelong conditions that affect every aspect of an individual's life and the lives of his or her family. The good news is that FASDs are *completely* preventable.

There is *no* known amount of alcohol that is safe to drink while pregnant. All drinks that contain alcohol can harm an unborn baby. This includes beer and wine. There is *no* safe time to drink during pregnancy. Alcohol can harm a baby at *any* time during pregnancy, including before a woman even realizes she's pregnant. So, women who are pregnant, trying to get pregnant, or could become pregnant, should avoid drinking altogether.

For more information, visit our website at www.cdc.gov and search for fetal alcohol spectrum disorders, or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.

Thanks for listening. To submit *your* question to *Ask CDC*, email us at askcdc@cdc.gov.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO, 24/7.