



## Caring for your baby starts during your pregnancy.

Drug use affects the unborn baby's brain. This causes the child to have trouble concentrating, thinking and learning.

Please read our other brochures that are part of our **10 FACTS** series:

-  **Alcohol Use** in Pregnancy
-  **Marijuana Use** in Pregnancy
-  **Tobacco Use** in Pregnancy
-  **Second Hand Tobacco Smoke**

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## 10 FACTS About Drug Use in Pregnancy



# 10 FACTS

## You Should Know:

1

**Any drug – cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine or any other illegal substance that a pregnant woman takes goes into her baby's body.**

The food a pregnant woman eats, the beverages she drinks, and the drugs she takes, all pass through the umbilical chord from her body to her unborn baby's body. The baby has no protection from any drugs that are put into her body.

2

**Drugs can starve parts of the baby's body and prevent it from growing.**

Drugs can cut off some or all of the food and oxygen that the baby needs to grow. The baby can be born too small or too early. This makes it more likely that the baby will die in the first year of life.

3

**Heroin and other narcotics, including methadone, can cause a baby to go through drug withdrawal.**

Heroin and other narcotics can cause babies to be small, underweight and may cause the baby to have a small brain. All narcotics can cause your baby to shake, tremor, cry hard and have diarrhea and vomiting. The baby may go through withdrawal from narcotics just like an adult who quits heroin "cold turkey." Needle use puts both you and your baby at risk for hepatitis and AIDS.

4

**Cocaine and methamphetamine can cause a baby to have a stroke or heart attack in the womb.**

Cocaine and methamphetamine cut off the blood supply to the baby's brain, heart, and other parts of the body.

5

**Cocaine, methamphetamine, and heroin and other narcotics can cause miscarriage, early birth, and nervous system problems in the baby.**

Using any of these drugs at any time can cause a pregnant woman to lose her pregnancy at any time or to have the baby too soon, when it is not fully grown. The baby can have heart and breathing problems or be born weak and may die.

6

**Drugs in the breast milk can harm the baby.**

All drugs can enter the baby through the mother's breast milk. Drugs in breast milk can hurt the baby's brain development. Cocaine and methamphetamine in the breast milk can cause the baby to have a stroke or heart attack.

7

**Second-hand smoke can harm your baby.**

Crack or methamphetamine smoke from other people can cause your baby to cough, have trouble breathing and have nervous system problems, including seizures.

8

**Babies whose mothers use drugs are more likely to die of crib death.**

Babies whose mothers use any drugs, especially cigarettes, are much more likely to die of crib death in the first few months after birth.

9

**Children whose mothers use drugs during pregnancy can have learning and behavior problems when they get to school age.**

Children exposed to drugs when in the womb can have trouble learning to talk when they are young and can have trouble paying attention to what you say. As the children grow up, they are more likely to have learning problems in school. These problems include trouble paying attention, aggressive behavior, and being easily thrown off track when they are trying to think or solve a problem.

10

**It is never too late in your pregnancy to quit using drugs.**

No matter how far along you are in your pregnancy, it is much better for your baby if you quit using drugs than if you continue. The baby will have a better chance to develop normally.

*References from research articles regarding these "10 Facts" can be found at [www.ntiupstream.com](http://www.ntiupstream.com)*



**STAY HEALTHY**  
**During Your Pregnancy**