



Children's Health

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

WHAT IT IS AND WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

When a pregnant woman drinks alcohol, she and her unborn baby will share the same blood alcohol levels. Alcohol is very dangerous to a developing fetus. Drinking alcohol during pregnancy puts a baby at risk for physical and mental retardation. It's estimated that one in every five to 10 cases of mental retardation are due to fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS). Consuming alcohol during pregnancy can also cause miscarriage, stillbirths, premature births and low-birth-weight babies.



SIGNS OF FETAL ALCOHOL SYNDROME

- low birth weight
- mental retardation
- poor coordination
- narrow eye openings
- small head
- poor growth
- abnormal bending of fingers or toes
- heart valve defects
- excess fluid in the brain
- cleft palate
- genital abnormalities
- benign tumors in infancy