

ALCOHOL AND SMOKING

There is no safe amount of alcohol so we recommend avoiding all alcohol during pregnancy. Drinking alcohol can cause birth defects and abnormal brain development.

If you smoke, so does your baby. This is a very important fact of pregnancy. Here are some know complications from smoking during pregnancy.

- **Low birth weight baby:** low birth weight can be caused by prematurity (birth less than 37 weeks) poor growth, or a combination of both. Prematurity is increased in pregnant smokers and is the number one cause of neonatal death and chronic illness in babies. Problems such as cerebral palsy, life-long lung, kidney or other organ problems, mental retardation and learning disabilities are much more common in premature and low birth weight babies.
- **Placenta previa:** Low-lying placenta that covers part or all of the opening to the uterus. Placenta previa blocks the exit of the baby from the uterus causing the baby and mother to bleed.
- **Placental abruption:** The placenta tears away from the uterus causing the mother and baby to bleed.
- **Preterm premature rupture of membranes:** the water breaks before 37 weeks of pregnancy, which is associated with an increase of preterm and low birth weight babies.
- **Stillbirth:** The fetus has died in the uterus.