

Judicial Bench Card

Prenatal	Alcohol	Exposure
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Prevalence of Alcohol Use

- Non-pregnant women during child bearing years: 54%
- Month before pregnancy: 50%
- Pregnant women: 12% (1 in 8)
- Third trimester of pregnancy: 4.6%

Rates of Prenatal Alcohol Exposure (PAE)

- Children of women in Substance abuse treatment: near 100%
- Children of women in prison: 80%
- Children in foster care: 70-80%
- Increased in women with other drug use

Drinking and Pregnancy

In the majority of cases, drinking primarily occurs on weekends, but for women with alcohol use disorders drinking may occur on most days.

Alcohol rapidly crosses from the mother to fetus. Increasing maternal blood alcohol can be detected in fetus in 1 minute. Maternal-fetal ethanol concentrations reach equilibrium in about two hours after women quit drinking.

Alcohol elimination from the fetus and amniotic fluid relies on mother's alcohol metabolism. The alcohol elimination capacity of the fetus is 5% of the mother's capacity. Promptly after birth, alcohol elimination rates reach 83.5% of maternal elimination rate.

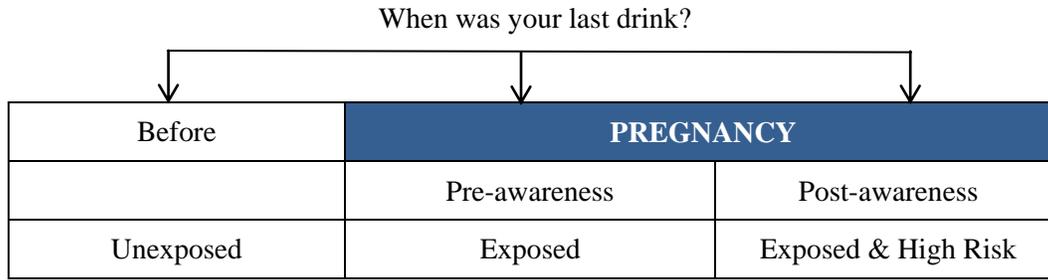
Variation in Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC)

BAC varies from person to person. For example, BAC varies by about 4 fold for women of the same weight consuming the same amount of ethanol.

PAE is an important marker for increased risk of postnatal environmental adversity

PAE is associated with increased rates of environmental adversity including other substance abuse, smoking, neglect, abuse, malnutrition, stressful life circumstances and mortality. These often persist throughout infancy and childhood. PAE should also be considered in risk stratification for alcohol exposure in both previous and future pregnancies.

Screening for PAE*



Other useful screens; TACE, TWEAK, AUDIT or AUDIT-C.

What we might want to know about drinking during pregnancy

SCREENING FOR ALCOHOL ABUSE ASSESSMENT OF EXPOSURE DURING PREGNANCY

- On average how many days per week did you drink during pregnancy? _____(a)
- On an average drinking day during pregnancy how many drinks did you have? _____(b)
- How many days per month did you have 4 or more drinks during pregnancy? _____(c)
- What is the most you had to drink on any one day during pregnancy _____(d)

EXPOSURE PARAMETERS

(Cumulative exposure during pregnancy)

- Pregnancy Drinking Days** = (a x 40) = _____(e)
Estimates number of drinking days during pregnancy
- Percent of Days Exposed During Pregnancy**
Estimates days exposed during pregnancy = (e ÷ 280) = _____
- Number of Binge Days (4 or more drinks in one day)** = (c x 9) = _____
Estimated number of binge days
- Number of Drinks During Pregnancy** = (a x b x 40) = _____(f)
Estimates cumulative number of drinks during pregnancy.
- Ounces of absolute alcohol** = (f ÷ 2) = _____
Estimates cumulative absolute alcohol exposure during pregnancy.

Effective intervention NOW reduces risk for alcohol exposure in subsequent pregnancies

Getting Services for Mothers

- Ask “when was your last drink?”
- Ask if she has been in treatment previously. Should she return to the same program or does she need a different treatment provider?
- Determine if she may have an FASD. If yes, what modifications does she need to improve her response to treatment?
- Ask “what is the success rate of the treatment program for similar women?”
- Ask if planning to create a substance use free environment needs to start now. Who will participate and when will they report back to the court?

*If the screening reveals a child was prenatally exposed to alcohol, see the Judicial Bench card on FASD for more next steps.