

ALCOHOL USE DURING PREGNANCY

Drinking alcohol, in any amount, is not recommended for women who are pregnant or may become pregnant.⁷⁰ When a pregnant woman consumes alcohol, the alcohol passes across the placenta to the fetus and can increase the risks of miscarriage, stillbirth, and serious and lifelong disorders known as fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASDs). Children with FASD may experience delayed development, poor muscle tone, heart defects, and malformation in their faces.⁷¹ In order to prevent FASD, a woman should not drink alcohol during pregnancy, when she is trying to conceive, or if she is sexually active and not using effective contraception.⁷²

In 2009-2010, any alcohol use during the last three months of pregnancy was reported

by 6.8 percent of mothers. The proportion of mothers reporting alcohol use during the last trimester of pregnancy increased with maternal age, ranging from 2.4 percent of those aged 19 years or younger to about 10 percent of women aged 30 years or older. With respect to maternal education, drinking during the last trimester of pregnancy was more common among mothers with 16 years or more of education (11.4 percent) and least common among those with less than 12 years of education (3.5 percent) (data not shown).

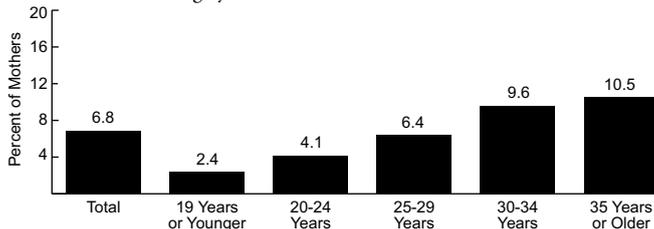
Cessation of alcohol use during pregnancy is a key public health issue, as more than half (52.8 percent) of mothers reported that they had consumed alcohol during the three months prior to pregnancy (data not shown). Among those who had consumed alcohol prior to pregnancy, 87.5

percent reported that they did not drink during their third trimester. Non-Hispanic Asian mothers (81.7 percent) were significantly less likely to stop consuming alcohol as compared to mothers of all other racial and ethnic groups. The proportion of mothers to report cessation of alcohol use varied by maternal age, with cessation more common among younger mothers (data not shown).

Some women may need professional help in order to overcome dependency on alcohol. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that women contact their doctors, Alcoholics Anonymous, or a local alcohol treatment center.⁷² The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has a treatment facility locator (<http://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/>).

Any Alcohol Use During the Last 3 Months of Pregnancy, by Maternal Age, 2009-2010*

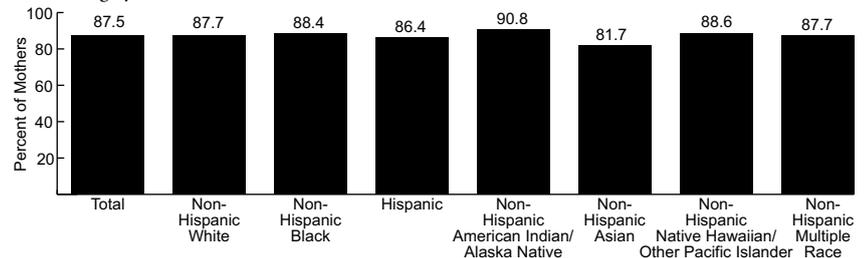
Source (II.5): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System



*Includes data from a total of 30 states and New York City; 25 states contributed both years; mothers completed surveys between 2 and 9 months postpartum.

Cessation of Alcohol Use Prior to the Last 3 Months of Pregnancy, by Race/Ethnicity, 2009-2010*, **

Source (II.5): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System



*Includes data from a total of 30 states and New York City; 25 states contributed both years; mothers completed surveys between 2 and 9 months postpartum. **Includes data from mothers who reported alcohol use prior to pregnancy.