

Substance Use and Pregnancy: What You Need to Know

It is important to start prenatal care as soon as you know you are pregnant. This gives you and your baby the best chance at a healthy pregnancy and birth. We hope this information can help you understand what to do if you or someone you know is pregnant and using substances.

In Indiana, the law says healthcare providers have to ask all pregnant individuals questions about substance use. Some providers might do a urine drug screen. The reason for this is to help you and your baby get the right treatment.

- Healthcare providers cannot report the results of a positive screen while pregnant to police or Department of Child Services (DCS) unless they have the patient's written consent or a court order.
- However, healthcare providers can report to DCS if your baby has a positive drug screen at birth. Being involved in recovery services can help when it comes to your DCS case.

Medication assisted therapy (MAT) is safe during pregnancy and recommended by the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

- Stopping your prescribed methadone or buprenorphine during pregnancy without care from a provider can be dangerous for mom and baby. Always talk to your OB provider before changing or stopping these medications.
- In most cases, the benefits of using MAT outweigh the risks of stopping substance use while pregnant. Although your baby may experience withdrawal symptoms, this is a treatable condition.
- Testing positive for methadone or buprenorphine is not illegal if you are receiving it from a treatment program.

Families and friends should be aware that Narcan can be used on pregnant individuals in case of an overdose.

Marijuana, while legal in some states, is still illegal in Indiana. A positive test at birth may result in a DCS report.

- Research suggests marijuana can have harmful effects on your growing baby, but studies are still being done. Because the possible harms are not known, it is not recommended to use marijuana during pregnancy.

Talk to your OB provider about all medications you are taking. Many medications, including benzos, amphetamines, and stimulants, may have harmful effects on your growing baby. Never take a prescription medication that is not written for you.

Nicotine from tobacco smoke passes through the placenta of a pregnant person to their baby.

- Health risks include a baby with low birth weight, learning problems, behavior problems, and higher risk for SIDS.
- The more tobacco a pregnant person uses, the greater the chance of health problems for their child.
- E-cigarettes/vapes and smokeless tobacco also have nicotine and are unsafe during pregnancy.

Drinking alcohol, in any amount, can cause permanent, lifelong harm to your growing baby including learning disabilities and physical defects. It is recommended that you stop drinking alcohol during pregnancy.

The earlier you talk with your healthcare provider about your substance use, the better chance you and your baby have for a healthy pregnancy and delivery. There are people who want to help you and your baby be safe.



Resources for Pregnant Individuals With Substance Use Disorder



CHOICE Program – Community Hospital East offers care to pregnant individuals struggling with substance use disorder. This program is designed to help each patient get into a treatment program to support the path to recovery. The CHOICE program is covered by most pregnancy-related insurance, including Medicaid. Call **317-355-1482** or visit www.ecommunity.com/CHOICE.

Eskenazi Health Circle of Recovery for Families – Services for pregnant individuals with substance use disorders. The program has a family-centered approach and provides a primary care home for patients, in addition to substance use disorder treatment. Services are ongoing throughout pregnancy and beyond, building long-term relationships between families and the health care team. Call **317-880-5950** for more info.

IU Health Riley Outpatient-Based Opioid Treatment Program – Managed through Riley's maternal fetal medicine team. Referrals are through your OB, or call **317-944-7010** for more information.

Indiana Pregnancy Promise Program – A free, voluntary program for pregnant and postpartum Medicaid members who are or have been impacted by substance use disorder. The program connects you to prenatal and postpartum care, other physical and mental health care, and treatment for opioid use disorder. The Pregnancy Promise Program provides support during the prenatal period and for 12 months after the end of pregnancy. Through these supports and relationships, the program provides hope to parents and babies and sets a strong foundation for their future. It now offers a childcare benefit for all enrollees. Enroll or refer someone at www.in.gov/fssa/promise.

Recovery Assist Platform – An online directory from the Marion County Public Health Department to find resources and support for persons with substance use disorder. Search for providers by the type of service, populations they serve, location, payment options and more. Visit www.recoveryassistplatform.com for more information.

Substance Use Outreach Services (SUOS) from the Marion County Public Health Department – Substance use case management, free/low cost STI testing, and referrals for support services. SUOS can link you to providers for treatment, as well as provide financial assistance for treatment programs. Call **317-221-4618** for more information.

Intouch Outreach (ITOR) – Offers peer recovery and community support services to individuals and families in need. Visit www.intouchoutreach.org for more information.

MOMS Helpline – Resource and referral system for Indiana moms, children, and families. Help with referrals to programs such as WIC, Medicaid, home visiting, prenatal care, pediatricians, dentists, food stamps, and more. Call **1-844-624-6667** for more information.

National Maternal Mental Health Hotline – Provides 24/7, free, confidential support before, during, and after pregnancy. The Hotline offers phone or text access to professional counselors, resources, referrals to local and telehealth providers and support groups. Call or text **1-833-943-5746**.

Tobacco Quitline – Assistance with tobacco cessation. Call **1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8559)**.

Suicide and Crisis Lifeline - call or text **988** 24/7

