

5 Things to Know About Alcohol SBI and Pregnancy during FASD Awareness Month

September is Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) Awareness Month. This annual observance highlights the importance of talking about FASD, preventing FASD, and supporting families living with FASD.

FASDs are a group of conditions that can occur in a person who was exposed to alcohol before birth. It is estimated that up to one in 20 U.S. schoolchildren may have FASDs. Nearly one in seven pregnant people report drinking alcohol, and about one in 20 report binge drinking in the past 30 days. While evidence-based approaches to decreasing alcohol use during pregnancy exist, research suggests healthcare professionals face challenges in implementing them consistently and effectively.



This FASD Awareness Month, [implement alcohol screening and brief intervention](#) (SBI) into your practice for all adult patients and [learn how to discuss](#) alcohol and pregnancy with your patients. Alcohol SBI is recommended by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force and endorsed by major medical professional organizations, such as the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), American Academy of Family Physicians, American Medical Association, and American Academy of Pediatrics, as well as CDC.

5 things to know about prenatal alcohol exposure and alcohol SBI

1. Prenatal alcohol exposure is a leading preventable cause of birth defects and neurodevelopmental abnormalities in the U.S. [FASDs](#) are preventable if a developing baby is not exposed to alcohol before birth.

2. Not all babies will be affected by prenatal alcohol exposure. However, it is impossible to know which babies will be affected, and no definite test for FASDs is available. Therefore, there is no known safe amount, no safe time, and no safe type of alcohol use during pregnancy.

3. Alcohol SBI is quick and may be [reimbursable](#). Although many screening tools exist, a brief screening can be conducted using as little as one question, and the entire service takes about 2-10 minutes.

4. Alcohol SBI works! In a 2021 study, 83% of healthcare providers who conduct SBI said they have seen positive behavior changes in patients after conducting SBI with them.

5. Resources and free CMEs are available to help you.

- CDC: [Alcohol SBI Implementation Guide](#)
- [Single Alcohol Screening Question \(SASQ\)](#)
- CDC: [Let's Talk Patient Education Materials](#)
- [How to Begin a Conversation about Alcohol Use](#) (video)
- NIAAA: [The Healthcare Professional's Core Resource on Alcohol](#) (CMEs/CEs available)