

What Can I Do to Stop Using Cocaine?

It is important that you continue to see your Healthcare Provider throughout your pregnancy and that you are honest with them especially during your pregnancy. They can help you with delivering a healthy baby if they know everything about your health. Good prenatal care can help your baby be born healthy.

There are several options available to help you stop using cocaine. Please speak with your Healthcare Provider or Healthcare Specialist to find out more information.

If you not sure you want to enter treatment and want to try quitting on your own, it is still a good idea to have a positive support person to help you. Quitting cocaine is not easy and you should not feel embarrassed if you have a hard time quitting. We understand drug use during pregnancy is a result of the powerful influence of addiction. There are people that work with your Healthcare Provider that can help you quit cocaine, just ask to speak with them.

It's never too late. You should never feel ashamed to ask for help.

For More Information

Allegheny County SBIRT Project- Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment

110 Roessler Road
Suite 200B
Pittsburgh, PA 15220
412-253-1260

American Pregnancy Association

1-800-672-2296
www.americanpregnancy.org

March of Dimes

1275 Mamaroneck Avenue
White Plains, NY 10605
National Office Phone:
(914) 997-4488
www.marchofdimes.com

Merck & Co., Inc.

One Merck Drive
P.O. Box 100
Whitehouse Station, NJ 08889-0100
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Monday-Friday 8:30 AM - 5:30 PM ET
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Bureau of Drug and Alcohol Programs**
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Harrisburg, PA 17104

Cocaine Use and Your Pregnancy



Allegheny County SBIRT Project

What Happens When a Pregnant Woman Uses Cocaine?

Cocaine enters the baby's circulation when it is passed through the placenta. Because it takes longer for the baby to eliminate the cocaine, cocaine stays in the baby's body much longer than in adults. Cocaine can be found in both the hair and urine of an exposed newborn.

How Can Cocaine Affect My Baby?

Cocaine constricts the blood vessels, possibly reducing blood flow and oxygen supply to your baby, which can lead to reduced growth.

Babies born to mothers who used cocaine during their pregnancy may experience withdrawal symptoms such as tremors, sleeplessness, muscle spasms and difficulty feeding. These symptoms start about 1 to 2 days after delivery.

Prolonged use of cocaine during pregnancy can lead to abnormalities of the brain, skull, face, eyes, heart, limbs, intestines, genitals and urinary tract.

Cocaine-exposed infants have been found to be more irritable, jittery and have interrupted sleep patterns and visual disturbances which may last 8 to 10 weeks or even longer.

Not all damage is visible. Cocaine can also cause central nervous system problems that may not be seen until the child is older. These may lead to learning problems, behavioral changes and developmental problems.

I Hear That Using Cocaine During Pregnancy Can Cause a Miscarriage.

During the early months of pregnancy, cocaine use may increase the risk for miscarriages. Later in pregnancy, cocaine use can cause the placenta to separate from the wall of the uterus (placenta abruption) which can cause extensive bleeding and even death in both the mother and her baby. Women who use cocaine during their pregnancy have a 25% increased chance of premature delivery.

Birth Weight and Your Baby

Cocaine use can cause your baby to be low in birth weight. Since cocaine reduces the needed nutrients and oxygen to the baby by constricting the blood vessels, even full-term babies may not have grown normally.

Using additional substances, particularly cigarettes contribute to this factor. Premature infants that are low birth weight are more likely to die in their first month of life than normal-weight babies. They are also more likely to have life-long learning problems.

What if I Used Cocaine before I know I was Pregnant?

While there have not been any conclusive studies on single doses of cocaine during pregnancy, any use of cocaine while pregnant should be avoided. Birth defects and other side effects are usually a result of prolonged use, but studies are inconclusive. If a woman stops using cocaine, the risk of preterm labor remains, but the baby may grow at a normal rate.

It may be difficult, but if you have used cocaine throughout your pregnancy, you need to let your Healthcare Provider know so he/she can prepare the best care for you and your baby throughout your pregnancy and delivery. There are people here that are willing to help you in a non-judgmental manner. All conversations are confidential. It's never too late.