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# Media Release



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## Issue: Alcohol free pregnancy is best medicine!

[*“Permissibility, availability and accessibility - all increase consumption.”* Dalgarno Institute.]

Foetus susceptibility to alcohol has now long been unquestioned, as alcohol is a teratogen and as such crosses the placental wall. This has led to the identification of a raft of non-communicable disease/conditions known as Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, an irreversible and lifelong disability.

*This evidence-based reality has been brought into question by a small minority of late and that is very concerning when the spectre of FASD is not only real and looming, but a lifelong affliction that can be completely prevented when a woman abstains from alcohol whilst pregnant,, Mr Varcoe, Executive Director of the Dalgarno Institute, said today.*

It should be noted that FASD is not the only issue that can manifest as a result of Prenatal Alcohol Exposure (PAE). Fresh research reported in the respected Journal of ISBRA, **‘Alcoholism – Clinical & Experimental Research’** has again confirmed both the potential devastating impact of alcohol consumption on unborn child, It also recommends the practice of abstinence from alcohol during conception and pregnancy.

Research was conducted on the impact even light drinking may have during pregnancy on adult child. “At 22 years, PAE significantly predicted behaviour as measured with the adult self-report... Exposure at each trimester predicted increased behaviour problems on the Total Score, Internalizing, Externalizing, Attention, and Critical Items scales. Use across pregnancy predicted a higher rate of behaviour problems compared to no use...” The study went on to conclude, **“...There is no safe level or safe time during pregnancy for women to drink. These data demonstrate that the effects of PAE, even at low to moderate levels, extend into young adulthood and are most likely permanent.”**<sup>1</sup>

The previous evidence relates to the completion of the pregnancy to birth, other new evidence has revealed a growing risk of spontaneous abortions due to alcohol consumption during pregnancy. An extensive cohort study in Denmark revealed that, “Even low amounts of alcohol consumption during early pregnancy increased the risk of spontaneous abortion substantially. The results indicate that the foetus is particularly susceptible to alcohol exposure early in pregnancy.”<sup>2</sup>

*The evidence is clear: not drinking during pregnancy is the absolute best medicine.*

**The Dalgarno Institute recommends a far more aggressive, prolific and targeted education on alcohol and pregnancy, including clear and prominent warning labels on all alcoholic beverages.**

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### References

<sup>1</sup> The Association Between Prenatal Alcohol Exposure and Behaviour at 22 Years of Age

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/acer.12073/abstract>

<sup>2</sup> Moderate alcohol intake during pregnancy and risk of foetal death

<http://ije.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2012/01/08/ije.dvr189.abstract?etoc>

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