

# Side 1: As a health professional, you are uniquely positioned to influence positive behavior change.



A history of sexual or physical abuse increases risk for alcohol or drug use disorders.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN

- Database of Colorado treatment, prevention and recovery support programs: [LinkingCare.org](http://LinkingCare.org)
- Care for mothers experiencing addiction: [MothersConnection.com](http://MothersConnection.com)
- Colorado Crisis and Support Line: **1-844-493-TALK (8255)**



- [GoodToKnowColorado.com](http://GoodToKnowColorado.com)
- [Colorado.gov/marijuana](http://Colorado.gov/marijuana)
- [www.SBIRTColorado.org](http://www.SBIRTColorado.org)

## Lower Risk Drink Limits\*

	PER DAY no more than	PER WEEK no more than
WOMEN	3	7
MEN	4	14

**LESS IS BETTER**

\*NIAAA ([www.RethinkingDrinking.NIAAA.NIH.gov](http://www.RethinkingDrinking.NIAAA.NIH.gov))



Women experience alcohol-related problems at lower levels of drinking than men.

### Why?

- Less body water to dilute alcohol
- More fatty tissue to retain alcohol
- Lower levels of enzymes that metabolize alcohol

Alcohol remains at higher concentrations for longer periods of time in a woman's body.

### Key points for alcohol brief interventions:

- Breast, liver, throat cancers
- Falls
- Liver disease
- Alcohol-induced brain damage
- Experiencing violence
- Unintended or unwanted sexual activity, STIs and unintended pregnancy
- Low bone density

See the Adult SBIRT pocket card for other alcohol-related consequences.

Women and Substance Use



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**SBIRT in Colorado | 303.369.0039 ext. 245 | [www.SBIRTColorado.org](http://www.SBIRTColorado.org)**

## Side 2: Preventing Substance-Exposed Pregnancy

### FASD Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders:

There is no known safe amount of alcohol use during pregnancy or when trying to get pregnant. There is also no safe time to drink during pregnancy (CDC).

- Key Points:**
- FASD is irreversible and 100% preventable
  - All forms of alcohol pose a similar risk
  - Heavier use increases risk

### Alcohol consumption during pregnancy may lead to:

- Miscarriage or stillbirth
- Prematurity
- Low birth weight
- A range of neurocognitive and behavioral problems. Some may not appear until early childhood/school-age
- Developmental disability
- Serious physical malformations including major organ damage



**Ask all women of child-bearing age:**

*“Are you hoping to become pregnant in the next year?”*

**Listen for:**

Motivation to change - Fears regarding change

**Alcohol Brief Screening:** *“How many times in the past year have you had 4 or more drinks in one day?”*

#### Step 1

**Ask, are you...**

- Able to become pregnant?
- Sexually active with a male or planning pregnancy using another method?
- Using effective form(s) of contraception consistently?

#### Step 2

**Discuss**

- Approaches to prevent pregnancy
- Interest in using contraception

#### Step 3

**Use validated screening questions**

AUDIT-C/AUDIT  
TWEAK  
T-ACE

[www.SBIRTColorado.org](http://www.SBIRTColorado.org)

#### Step 4

**Explore and negotiate**

- Options to avoid pregnancy and/or reduce alcohol or drug use
- Consider that partner substance use may influence motivation

### EFFECTIVENESS OF FAMILY PLANNING ~50% of all U.S. pregnancies are unplanned

Most Effective

↓  
Least Effective

Implant • Intrauterine Device • Male Sterilization • Female Sterilization

Injectables • Pill • Patch • Ring • Diaphragm

Male Condom • Female Condom • Withdrawal • Sponge

Fertility-Awareness Methods • Spermicide



### MARIJUANA USE DURING PREGNANCY AND BREASTFEEDING

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recommends abstinence from medical and recreational marijuana during pregnancy and breastfeeding.

- THC crosses the placenta and is present in breast milk.
- Use during pregnancy can affect the child later in life and has been associated with lower scores on tests of attention, coordination and behavior.