

**For more information
about the effects of
amphetamine use during
pregnancy, call:**

- your doctor
- a public health nurse
- an alcohol and drug counsellor
- Motherrisk infoline
(confidential counselling)
Toll Free 1-877-327-4636

Sheway

533 East Hastings, Vancouver, B.C.
Phone: 604-216-1699

A/D Information Line

Phone: 604-660-9382
1-800-663-1441

Detox Access Line

Phone: 604-658-1250

Pender Clinic

59 West Pender, Vancouver, B.C.
Phone: 604-669-9181

**3-Bridges Community Health
Centre**

1292 Hornby Street, Vancouver, B.C.
Phone: 604-736-9844

**Community Aboriginal Health
Advocate: Phone: 604-873-1833**

Mental Health Liaison Worker
Phone: 604-872-6723

Adapted with permission from Vancouver
Island Health Authority, South Island
Prevention Services

Revised by:
Fir Square Family Education - June 2004

© 2003 Children's & Women's
Health Centre of British Columbia

BCW#737

Amphetamine Use During Pregnancy

Effects on Mother and Baby



4500 Oak Street,
Vancouver, B.C.
V6H 3N1

How do amphetamines work?

Amphetamines and other stimulants are drugs which speed up the central nervous system. Release of chemicals in the brain causes effects similar to an adrenaline “rush”, i.e., feelings of being alert, confident and energetic, with little appetite.

Street amphetamines may be injected, inhaled, swallowed, or sniffed. Prescription amphetamines are used for conditions such as weight loss and hyperactivity.

What are the effects of amphetamines for the pregnant woman?

- narrowing of the arteries, which may cause high blood pressure or separation of the placenta from the uterus wall

What are the effects of prenatal amphetamines use on the baby?

Not much is known about how prenatal amphetamine use in the prenatal period affects the baby. Effects are thought to be similar to cocaine, which is also a stimulant. Some effects may be:

- premature birth
- smaller baby, including brain size
- feeding problems
- sleeping problems
- stiffer muscle tone
- irritability

What about breastfeeding?

Most experts do not recommend breastfeeding if amphetamines are actively being used. If you require an amphetamine for medical reasons, discuss treatment and breastfeeding options with your doctor.

What are the outcomes for children?

There is not much research available. Some studies have found children to be at greater risk of developing behavioural problems, including aggression.

Remember...

This information is general. Effects of drug and alcohol use are different for every pregnancy and every infant, depending on:

- amount used
- if other drugs are used, and which ones
- when in the pregnancy the drugs are used
- mother’s general health
- other risks in the baby’s environment

It helps you and your baby if you cut back or stop using amphetamines at any point in your pregnancy.