

**Health Risks of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs**

More information can be found at <https://www.drugabuse.gov/>

Note: All the substances listed below have been shown to have significant teratogenic properties leading to birth defects. The risks associated with use and abuse of these substances are magnified during pregnancy. Recent research points to the possibility that the use or abuse of substances prior to conception can pose significant birth defect risks.

DRUG TYPE	HEALTH RISKS
Alcohol	Lowered resistance to disease, insomnia, unprotected sex, sexual dysfunction, depression, other mental illness, pancreatitis, cirrhosis.
Tobacco	Heart attack, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, lung and liver diseases, stroke, cancers (lung, larynx, mouth, pancreatic, liver, colorectal), Type 2 diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, erectile dysfunction, macular degeneration.
Marijuana	Heart, lung, and brain damage, paranoia, decreased motivation, depression, other mental illness, impaired memory, adverse effect on learning ability.
Steroids	Mood and behavior effects, acne, high blood pressure, liver damage; in males: atrophy of testes, reduced sperm count, breast enlargement, baldness, increased cancer risk; in females: facial hair growth, baldness, changes in genitalia and menstrual cycle, deepened voice; in adolescents: student growth, accelerated puberty.
Inhalants / Solvents	Mental illness, liver and kidney damage, hearing loss, bone marrow and brain damage, heart failure, respiratory arrest.
Depressants	Disorientation, insomnia, depression, addiction, cardiovascular events, psychosis, liver damage, convulsions.
Hallucinogens	Agitation, extreme hyperactivity, reduced eating, flashbacks.
Stimulants	Addiction, headaches, depression, malnutrition, strokes, cardiovascular events, seizures, psychosis, anorexia.
Narcotics	Addiction, memory or attention impairment, sleepiness, nausea, severe constipation, increased risk of infectious disease, organ damage, lung damage, respiratory arrest.

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