

# First Aid, Best Aid



FASD is 100% Preventable but unfortunately it is Not Curable.

The ONLY way to prevent FASD is to abstain from alcohol. This is the safest option because in many cases of pregnancy the mother is unaware that she is pregnant for the first trimester. Best practice is to avoid all alcohol if you are planning to get pregnant, or not using contraception. Drinking alcohol during this period may cause FASD.



*Fetus in Amniotic sac is vulnerable to Alcohol ...*

## Join 'Isabella's list' today

Who is Isabella?

[www.dalgarnoinstitute.org.au/dalgarno.html](http://www.dalgarnoinstitute.org.au/dalgarno.html)

What is Isabella's list?

- Mothers and Women of all ages who are committed to seeing drug free families and communities. They are also keen to minimise the use of alcohol in families, particularly for the children.
- As a member of Isabella's list you will have opportunities to make a difference by joining with others and being part of proactive and protective community action initiatives

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DALGARNO INSTITUTE

*"Over 150 years of minimising harm  
by Maximising Prevention"*

# fasd

-FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER



# FASD—The preventable scourge

**DEFINITION:** FASD is an umbrella term for a range of physical and mental effects caused by alcohol taken by a woman during pregnancy and breastfeeding.



*A Teratogenic Substance called Thalidomide caused this... Alcohol is also Teratogenic*

A recent study put the toll of alcohol consumption at \$36 Billion per annum in Australia.<sup>2</sup> This study took into consideration costs that had never been calculated before. Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) is one of the costly by-products of alcohol consumption. It is

“an umbrella term used to describe a range of disabilities and a continuum of effects that may arise from prenatal alcohol exposure and it is widely recognized as the most common preventable cause of birth defects and brain damage in children.”<sup>3</sup> FASD is not a diagnosis in itself; it includes a range of diagnoses such as:

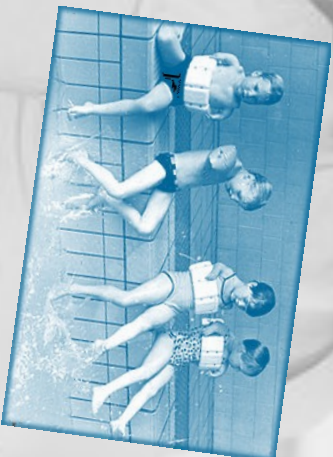
- FAS (Fetal Alcohol Syndrome)
- pFAS (partial Fetal Alcohol Syndrome)
- ARND (Alcohol Related Neurodevelopmental Disorders)
- ARBD (Alcohol Related Birth Defects)

Alcohol is a **Teratogenic**<sup>4</sup> substance. This means that alcohol crosses the placental barrier and interferes with the normal formation of the embryo causing malformations of the child in the womb.

The term Teratogenic is usually reserved for debilitating diseases such as Rubella and such horrors as so called ‘wonder drug’ **Thalidomide** which was patented in 1957

by the German Pharmaceutical company Grunenthal as an *antiemetic* substance (i.e. it alleviated symptoms of morning sickness). At this time it was thought as unlikely that any drug could cross the placental barrier. Between 1950 & 1960 over 10,000 children in 46 countries were born with deformities due to this drug. These children were called Thalidomide babies.<sup>5</sup>

Thalidomide became known as one of the most infamous **Teratogenic** substances and “one of the biggest medical tragedies of modern times”<sup>6</sup>. It caused ‘**phocomelia**’ (McGraw-Hill Concise Dictionary of Modern Medicine. © 2002) ‘or ‘flipper baby’ syndrome.’<sup>7</sup>



## THALIDOMIDE

*Thalidomide became known as one of the most infamous Teratogenic substances and “one of the biggest medical tragedies of modern times”<sup>6</sup>. It caused ‘phocomelia’ or ‘flipper baby’ syndrome.<sup>7</sup>*

*Alcohol has earned the dubious honour of proudly standing shoulder to shoulder with such a substance.*

Alcohol has earned the dubious honour of proudly standing shoulder to shoulder with such a substance.

Unlike the effects of Thalidomide which were unknown at the time of release, today the effects of alcohol on a child in the womb are well known. **FASD is 100% preventable!**<sup>8</sup>

Imagine if we were told today that Thalidomide would be put back on the market as a morning sickness drug? The thought of this is unthinkable! The entire nation would be up in arms, women everywhere would rise up against such a policy...yet, with hardly a whimper we allow

a powerful Teratogen – Alcohol with no warnings on it to be easily accessible to any woman over 18 years of age.

When a National Geographic photographer and contributor, George Steinmetz’s work took him to Dublin Ireland, he was faced with the plight of Ellen O’Donovan’s son Malcolm. He featured them in a National Geographic article (Vol 181, No.2). During his travels abroad

## Myths

Steinmetz saw the devastation caused by alcohol “I met them in every country I visited – some with tiny, twisted bodies, others with faces tragically skewed.”<sup>9</sup>

- **The science is incomplete and unclear — FALSE!**  
Since 1973 over 3000 medical articles have been presenting the true facts.<sup>13</sup>
- **Moderate drinking is safe — FALSE!**  
All drinking causes harm, heavier drinking causes more harm. The safest option is **NOT TO USE!**<sup>13</sup>
- **Beer and wine will not cause harm only spirits or liquor will — FALSE!**  
All these drinks contain alcohol which is the substance that causes the harm.<sup>13</sup>
- **Drugs like Cannabis, Cocaine & Heroin are more harmful than alcohol – FALSE!**  
Alcohol is the more harmful because it is Teratogenic whilst the others aren’t.<sup>13</sup>