



'049' = Zero Alcohol for Nine Months of Pregnancy

To: Vermont Healthcare Providers
From: Breena Holmes, MD, Director of Maternal & Child Health

– Please Distribute Widely –

The Vermont Department of Health is launching an informational outreach campaign called '049'. This campaign is designed to inform women of childbearing age and encourage health care providers to advise their patients about '049': to drink zero alcohol while trying to become pregnant, and throughout nine months of pregnancy.

049 will be launched statewide with a news release, social media messages and web resources. Health Department district office staff will deliver posters, buttons and print materials to help health care providers advise and support their patients in the decision not to drink.

In Vermont, health care providers advising women not to drink resulted in a significantly lower prevalence of drinking during pregnancy. Simply discussing alcohol or asking how much women drank did not change drinking prevalence. Nearly one-quarter (24%) of mothers report that they did not get advice from a health care provider to abstain from alcohol during pregnancy.*

Requested Action: Advise women who are pregnant or who may become pregnant to drink no alcohol before and throughout pregnancy. Use 049 informational materials to help you deliver this advice.

For more information and to view campaign materials: www.healthvermont.gov/adap/049

Prevent Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders

No amount of alcohol is safe during pregnancy. Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) is an umbrella term that describes the range of physical, mental, behavioral and learning disabilities that can affect a baby due to maternal drinking during pregnancy. FASD is not a clinical diagnosis. FASD describes irreversible brain damage, which may result in any of several alcohol-related medical diagnoses – including fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS), alcohol-related neurodevelopmental disorder (ARND) and alcohol-related birth defects (ARBD).

Nationally, FASD affects one out of every 100 live births. In Vermont:*

- 65% of women of childbearing age are current drinkers (drank alcohol in the past 30 days). Of these, 23% binge drink (having four or more drinks at a sitting).
- 35% of mothers report their pregnancy was unintended.

- 72% of mothers report drinking at least some alcohol in the three months before pregnancy, and nearly one-third (32%) reported at least one binge.
- Alcohol use is much more prevalent in pregnancy than the use of any other substances: 13% of women reported drinking during the last three months of their pregnancy, while 6% reported smoking marijuana.
- 24% of mothers report they did not get advice from a health care provider to abstain from alcohol during pregnancy.

* These data are from the Vermont 2011 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System and 2010 Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System.

For more information on this topic –

- American College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists (ACOG)
www.womenandalcohol.org
- Centers for Disease Control & Prevention
<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/>
- FASD Center for Excellence
www.fasdcenter.samhsa.gov
- National Institute on Alcohol Abuse & Alcoholism (NIAAA)
Helping Patients Who Drink Too Much: A Clinician's Guide
www.niaaa.nih.gov/guide
- Vermont Alcohol & Drug Information Clearinghouse
www.vadic.org