

Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding is good for baby and has lots of benefits. Breastfeeding can:

- Protect your baby from infection and illness.
- Provide your baby with healthy food.
- Help your baby to grow strong.
- Strengthen bonds with your baby.



Alcohol can pass to the baby through breastmilk. This can cause harm to the baby as it takes about 2 hours for one standard drink of alcohol to leave a woman's body.

Drinking alcohol while breastfeeding can reduce the amount of milk you produce and make the baby sleep less.

Stopping or reducing your alcohol use whilst breastfeeding is best for you and your baby.

Healthy choices for pregnancy and breastfeeding

Other things you can do to stay healthy and grow a strong baby include:

- Regular check-ups with your health worker.



- Daily exercise or physical activity.



- Lots of sleep and rest to help manage stress.



- Plenty of healthy food and water.



- Yarning with grannies, aunts, mums, sisters, cousins and friends about how to keep your baby strong and healthy.



Getting help and information

Sometimes women don't get help because they may feel shame talking about their alcohol use. But it's never too late - every effort made to stop or reduce the amount of alcohol consumed, will help grow a strong and healthy baby.

Aboriginal health workers or other health professionals are there to help you.

They can talk with you about ways to help you keep you and your baby strong and healthy. They can help you stop or cut down your use in safe ways.

It may not be easy to make changes but your family, friends and other people in your community can help and support you.

Aboriginal support system



For more information and help

Local Contact



Alcohol & Drug Support Line

The Alcohol and Drug Support Line can provide information about culturally secure alcohol and drug services in your area. They are a confidential, 24 hour, statewide telephone counselling, information and referral service for anyone concerned about their own or another person's alcohol or other drug use. Call backs are available.

Phone: 9442 5000 or 1800 198 024 (country callers)

E-mail: alcoholdrugsupport@mhc.wa.gov.au

Website: alcoholdrugsupport.mhc.wa.gov.au

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The Aboriginal Inner Spirit Model (Ngarlu Assessment Model) was developed by Joseph 'Nipper' Roe, who belonged to the Karajarri and Yawuru people.

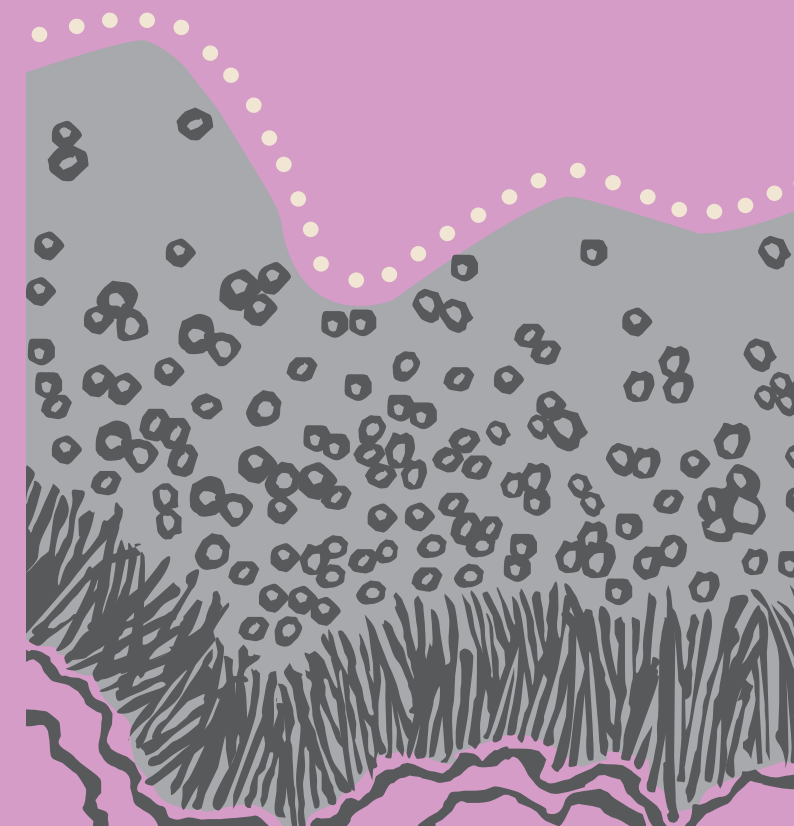
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alcohol
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Yarning about Alcohol and Pregnancy



Aboriginal Inner Spirit Model



Our inner spirit is the centre of our being and emotions.

When our spirit feels strong our mind feels strong.

When our spirit feels tangled our mind feels tangled.

Strong inner spirit is what keeps people healthy and keeps them connected together.

Strong inner spirit keeps our family strong, our community strong and our country alive.

There is no safe amount or time to drink alcohol during pregnancy



- Not drinking alcohol during pregnancy is important.
- Your placenta does not protect your baby from alcohol. So when you drink alcohol, so does your baby.
- Alcohol can cause lifelong harm to your baby, including physical, mental and behavioural disabilities. This is known as Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).
- Your baby's brain continues to grow throughout your whole pregnancy, and alcohol can damage your growing baby's brain at any time.
- The risk of harm increases the more you drink, and the more frequently you drink.

If you're pregnant or planning to have a baby, you shouldn't drink alcohol.



Our children need to be born healthy so they have a strong spirit and a strong mind.

Stopping or reducing alcohol use during pregnancy will help baby grow strong.

It might be hard, but not drinking alcohol is best for you and your baby.

If you or someone you know might be or is pregnant and are concerned that alcohol has been consumed, have a yarn with a health worker. There is no judgement or shame in yarning.

Ways to stop or reduce drinking alcohol during pregnancy

Some ways to help you stop or reduce your drinking when pregnant are:

- Have a yarn with your partner or family about you needing support to stop drinking alcohol when you're pregnant and breastfeeding.
- Choose an alcohol free drink you enjoy. This means you can still participate in social gatherings while you are pregnant.
- Finding other ways to help you relax, such as:
 - going for a walk.
 - doing low impact exercises such as yoga or swimming.
 - doing other activities you enjoy, like art, fishing or going out on country.
- You may not want to share that a pregnancy is the reason you are not drinking. It might be helpful to say you are not drinking because:
 - you are on a health kick.
 - you are trying to save money.
 - you are driving.

What Dads can do

It's not just up to mums. Dads are important too, and can make healthy choices to support their partners and families.

Dads can offer support by:

- Joining your partner in not drinking alcohol.
- Yarning with your partner about supporting their decision to not drink alcohol.
- Offering your partner alcohol-free alternatives.
- Going with your partner to antenatal classes.
- Eating healthy and exercising with your partner.
- Helping look after the kids by taking them hunting, fishing or down to the park.

