

# Opioid Use Disorder and Pregnancy



Opioid use disorder during pregnancy can harm you and your fetus. If you are pregnant and addicted to opioids, you need medical treatment.

Are you using more opioids than prescribed?

Do you feel a strong urge to use opioids?

Does your opioid use cause work, school, or family problems?

Do you need more opioids to get the same effect?

If you answered YES to any of these questions, you may have an opioid addiction, also called opioid use disorder.

## How Treatment Works

The recommended treatment for opioid addiction involves the following:

Taking medication that reduces your cravings (methadone or buprenorphine)



Getting behavioral therapy and counseling



# Why Treatment Matters

## In the right doses, methadone or buprenorphine can

- prevent withdrawal symptoms, cravings, and unhealthy use of opioids
- help prevent overdose
- make it more likely that your fetus will grow normally
- help prevent an early birth

## Counseling and good prenatal care can

- help you avoid and cope with situations that might lead to relapse
- help you have a healthier baby
- help you regain control of your health and life

## Treatment and Your Newborn

Babies born to people taking methadone or buprenorphine can have short-term withdrawal symptoms. Swaddling, breastfeeding, skin-to-skin contact, and sometimes medications can help make babies feel better.

### Did You Know?

- If you are prescribed an opioid during pregnancy, you should discuss the risks and benefits with your obstetrician–gynecologist (ob-gyn).
- When taken under a doctor's care, prescription opioids can be safe for both you and your fetus.
- It is important to take the medication only as prescribed.

**Remember, if you are addicted to opioids, ask your ob-gyn about safe treatments.**

**The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists believes that pregnant people who have an opioid use disorder should receive medical care and counseling services, not punishment. Many states have created treatment programs for pregnant people. Seeking help is the first step in recovering from addiction and making a better life for you and your family.**

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