[IMAGE]

Maternal Drinking Might Influence Attention Deficit Disorder

Maternal Drinking Might Influence Attention Deficit Disorder Children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) can have problems completing tasks, staying organized and keeping track of things. Problems with hyperactivity and/or impulsivity may also surface, including fidgeting, squirming, excessive talking and frequent interrupting. Because most children display these behaviors from time to time, it¹s not easy to determine whether a child has ADHD or is just going through the normal adjustments of "growing up."

The problems associated with ADHD can be persistent and severe, and while it’s not clear exactly what causes this condition, a recent study suggests that maternal drinking may play a role. Twenty-eight children were selected from three subject groups: children with fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS), a condition characterized by facial deformities due to maternal drinking; children with prenatal exposure to alcohol; and children with no prenatal exposure to alcohol. Researchers evaluated all 28 children in terms of "executive functioning" (EF) ‹ sequencing and self-monitoring, planning, ability to engage in goal-directed behaviors, critical thinking, etc. ‹ and found that those children exposed to alcohol (children with FAS or prenatal exposure) performed worse on tests of EF than children without prenatal exposure to alcohol.

These findings add to the considerable evidence that drinking alcohol during pregnancy can have profound negative consequences. Consult with your doctor before, during and after pregnancy to ensure the health of your child.

Reference:

Mattson SN, Goodman AM, Caine C, et al. Executive functioning in children with heavy prenatal alcohol exposure. *Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research*, Nov. 1999: Vol. 23, No. 11, pp1808-1815.

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