

# Opioids and Pregnancy: What Home Visitors Should Know



Substance misuse can be dangerous for pregnant women and their babies. According to the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology

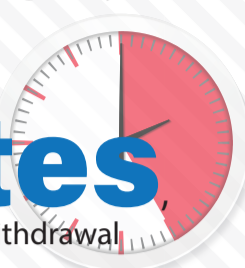
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women uses inappropriate drugs (sometimes known as "street drugs") during pregnancy.

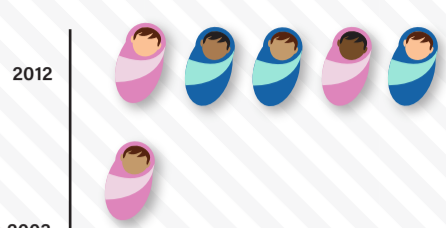
According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse every

## 15 minutes

a baby is born suffering from opioid withdrawal in the U.S.



From 2003 to 2012, U.S. babies born dependent on drugs increased nearly five-fold.



## The main cause: OPIOIDS



### What are Opioids?

Prescription opioids are drugs intended for pain relief after surgery or injury.



#### Common prescription opioids include:

- oxycodone (or oxy)
- codeine
- morphine
- fentanyl
- hydrocodone



Heroin, an illegal street drug, is also an opioid. Sometimes use of prescription opioids progresses to heroin use.



### Opioids affect the brain.

They reduce pain and feelings of worry. Opioids can also lead to a temporary feeling of numbness or intense pleasure.



### Opioids are highly addictive.

Their use can lead to dependency.



## Opioid misuse during pregnancy can cause serious problems for baby, including:



Poor fetal growth and low birth weight

Premature birth



Physical delays in development

Stillbirth



Cognitive skills delays in development

Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS)\*



\*This syndrome happens when opiates pass through the placenta and the baby becomes dependent on the drug, along with the mother. Signs of NAS can include body shakes, twitching, fussiness and excessive crying, poor weight gain, breathing problems, and other issues.

## Opioid misuse can also harm pregnant women, causing:



Dependency, physical and psychological

Overdose risk



Weakened immune system\*

Slow breathing rate



Nausea and vomiting

Hallucinations



Difficulty caring for baby

\*making it easier for mom to get sick



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