

Foetal Alcohol Syndrome

Foetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) is a condition in a child that results from the child's mother drinking alcohol during pregnancy.

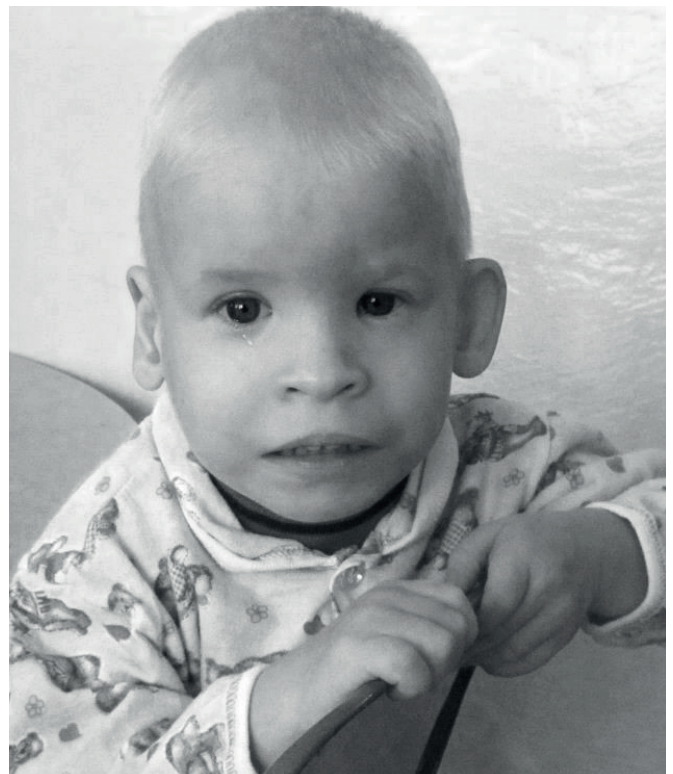
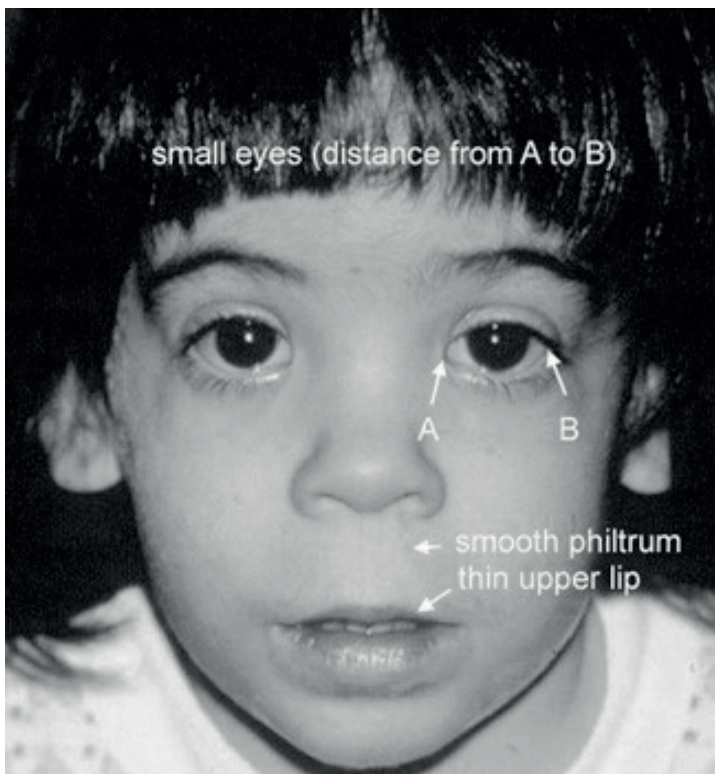


A baby in the womb gets its nourishment from the mother's bloodstream. If the mother drinks alcohol, this easily passes from her blood through the placenta to her baby's blood.

A baby's liver is one of the last organs to develop fully and doesn't mature until the later stages of pregnancy. This means that the baby cannot process alcohol as well as the mother can.

No amount of alcohol is safe to drink whilst pregnant. If you are pregnant or thinking about pregnancy it is important that you do not drink alcohol.

Children with foetal alcohol syndrome share certain facial features such as small eye openings, a thin upper lip, and a smooth philtrum (the groove between nose and upper lip).



Significant problems occurring from Foetal Alcohol Syndrome

Poor growth

Newborn babies may have low birth weights and small head sizes. They may not grow or gain weight as well as other children and may be short as adults.

Birth defects

Developing babies may have heart, bone, and kidney problems. Vision problems and hearing loss are common.

Seizures and other neurological problems

Such as poor balance and coordination.

Delayed development

Children may not reach milestones at the expected time.

Behavioural problems

Babies may be fussy or jittery, and have trouble sleeping.

Older children and teens may have:

- a lack of coordination and poor fine motor skills.
- poor social skills (difficulty getting along with friends and relating to others, etc.)
- learning difficulties, including poor memory, difficulty in school (especially math), and poor problem-solving skills.
- behavioural problems such as hyperactivity, poor attention and concentration, stubbornness, impulsiveness, and anxiety.