

Signs of FASD include:

- Difficulty learning, processing information or organising daily tasks;
- Intellectual and/or developmental disabilities;
- Unpredictable behaviour;
- Hyperactivity or attention problems;
- Memory challenges;
- Sensory difficulties;
- Challenges in the classroom;
- Difficulties with abstract thinking and making judgements including challenges with maths, understanding time and money;
- Social skills and adaptive behaviour challenges including behaving at a level much younger than their actual age;
- Struggling with motor skills;
- Poor social communication
- Struggling to learn from experience and repeating the same thing time and time again especially when stressed;
- Sleep issues.



Prenatal alcohol exposure should be actively considered as a possible underlying cause for neurodevelopmental delay.

SIGN 156, Current diagnostic guideline in England, Scotland and Wales

You are not alone

If you think that you or a loved one might have FASD, please reach out.



National FASD

The National FASD website is a vital resource for information and support related to Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, offering guidance and support, including gold standard training.

NationalFASD.org.uk



Me and My FASD

An informative and fun website for children and young people with FASD to help them understand their diagnosis.

FASD.me



Produced for the
Greater Manchester FASD Network
which helps families and professionals across Greater
Manchester to network and raise awareness.



gmfasdnetwork.info



Is your child struggling and you don't know why?

Ask about FASD

Research shows that more than 2 million people in the UK may have been affected by alcohol while they were in the womb.

Most haven't heard about FASD.

Diagnosis & support can help.



Could it be FASD?

If your child was exposed to any amount or type of alcohol at any time during pregnancy and is facing challenges at school, at home or in the community, then ask about FASD.

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is one of the most common neurodevelopmental conditions – more common than Autism. However, very few people have heard of it. This includes medical staff, teachers, social workers as well as parents and carers.

The UK has one of the highest rates of alcohol use while pregnant in the world. Many women don't even know that they are pregnant for some time into their pregnancy, so there is a significant risk of FASD.

Most families that are affected are not aware of FASD and how to support someone with the condition.

In recent years throughout the UK there are signs that more people are becoming aware of the challenges that people with FASD face each and every day. Public health bodies have said it's time for everyone who might have FASD to be identified and supported.

You can help ensure your family gets the right support.

Impact of alcohol and pregnancy

We know that no woman drinks to intentionally harm their baby. That's why sharing information about FASD is so important.

Alcohol can impact any organ or system in the developing baby. Very importantly, alcohol can affect the way that the brain develops, and this is the case for everyone who has FASD. That is why the challenges that they face can be very puzzling. Sometimes the physical development of the body has been impacted too, but with most people with FASD there are no outward signs. Over 400 conditions can co-occur with FASD.

Since 2016 the Chief Medical Officers advise it is safest to avoid all alcohol when pregnant or when you could become pregnant to keep the risks to the baby at a minimum. Before then the guidance was not as clear.

With the correct advice and support people with FASD can and do achieve.

Early diagnosis and support can build brighter futures. Having the right support in education is vital.

Seeking an FASD diagnosis for a child

The first port of call for most children is the GP. For children in care this can be highlighted at their regular medicals.

Ask the GP to refer you to a paediatrician (or sometimes CAMHS). The paediatrician may request a blood test to rule out any genetic issues.

To get a full picture, assessment should ideally include:

- Neurodevelopmental, neuropsychological or neurocognitive assessment – this will test adaptive behaviour and executive functioning;
- Speech and language assessment – a thorough assessment will explore not only how a person speaks but also should test receptive and semantic language (what they are understanding and processing);
- Sensory integration assessment – conducted by a specially trained Occupational Therapist. This should highlight areas of sensory challenges and provide what is sometimes called a 'sensory diet' of activities you can do at home to help with sensory issues.

Adults with possible FASD also should talk to their GP about accessing assessment.

