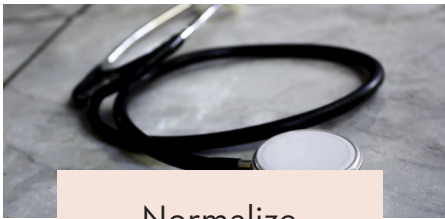


# TALKING ABOUT SUBSTANCE USE DURING PREGNANCY

## Collaborative Approaches for Health Care Providers

Asking questions about the type, frequency, and amount of substance use is often a routine part of prenatal care for physicians, midwives, nurses, pregnancy outreach workers and other prenatal care providers. Here are some ideas for open, supportive, and effective conversations with women.

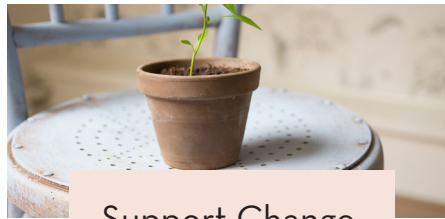


### Normalize

I ask all my patients about substance use as it's an important part of your health and the baby's health.

Lots of women have questions about drinking alcohol during pregnancy. What do you already know?

Many women are interested in making healthy lifestyle changes during pregnancy. Do you have any questions for me about diet or exercise or substance use?

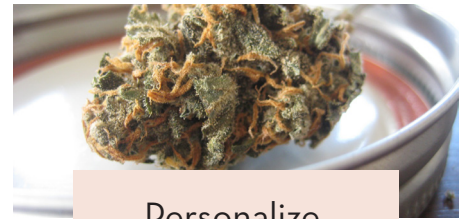


### Support Change

Well done. How did you do it?

What do you think might work for you?

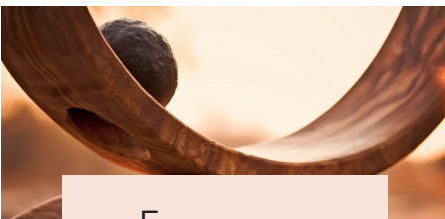
How have you managed (when your partner smokes in the evenings/ when you're at a party where others are drinking...)?



### Personalize

You mentioned to me some of your concerns about continuing to drink. Can I share with you some information about services that some of my other patients have found helpful?

Some of my clients are reluctant to talk about their substance use because they're worried about information being recorded or shared with other professionals. Are you interested in learning more about our clinic's confidentiality policy for future visits?

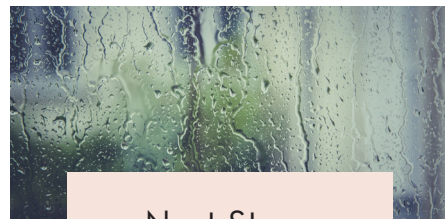


### Encourage

Thanks for coming today.

I appreciate that you're willing to talk to me about your substance use.

That's a good idea.



### Next Steps

Where do we go from here?

What would you like to do about that?

What concerns you most?



### Check In

I appreciate that some of this may be new information and I am wondering how it might fit for you?

Would that work for you?

Does that make sense?

# RESPONSES FOR CHALLENGING STATEMENTS

I read a study saying that a glass of wine every now and then is fine.

- ⇒ Can you tell me more about what you've been learning?
- ⇒ It can be confusing when there's so much information out there. What do you think about it?
- ⇒ I'm glad you brought this topic up. Can I share some information with you that you might find helpful?

What's the point in stopping now? The damage is already done.

- ⇒ What do you think will happen if you continue to drink?
- ⇒ How do you think you would feel if you did stop smoking?
- ⇒ What are you most worried about?

Cannabis is really helping with my morning sickness.

- ⇒ I'm glad you found something to help you feel better. Do you have any questions about the effects of cannabis on the baby or other ways of managing nausea?
- ⇒ Can you tell me more about how you've been coping?
- ⇒ What might be helpful for you now?



These approaches can make it more difficult to ask for help.

- **Scare tactics** - "Any alcohol is bad for the baby."
- **Confrontation** - "You really need to do something about your smoking."
- **Shaming or blaming** - "If you really cared about your baby, you wouldn't continue to drink."
- **Being the expert** - "I think you should..."
- **Criticizing** - "You're obviously not making this a priority."