

Glossary*

agenesis: Absence or failure of formation.

anomaly: Deviation from what is normal. Anything structurally unusual or irregular.

alcohol: The colorless, flammable liquid, ethanol, which is the intoxicating agent in whisky, gin, rum, beer, wine coolers and other fermented or distilled liquors.

alcohol-related birth defects/ARBD: A term used to describe the full spectrum of effects attributable to prenatal exposure to alcohol-from subtle to full fetal alcohol syndrome.

binge drinking: The drinking of a lot of alcohol at once, but at infrequent periods of time.

birth defect: An abnormality of body structure or function present at birth.

conceptus: The product of conception.

CNS (central nervous system): Brain and spinal cord.

corpus callosum: The major connection between the left and right halves of the brain.

dysgenesis: Defective embryonic development.

embryo: A conceptus, from the time of implantation to approximately eight weeks (60 days) of human development.

Fetal Alcohol Effects/FAE: The presence of some of the symptoms of FAS, but not enough to be diagnosed as fetal alcohol syndrome (usually the absence of facial characteristics).

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/FAS: A full spectrum of mental (central nervous system abnormalities) and physical effects (reduced growth and typical facial features) caused by prenatal alcohol exposure.

fetus: In humans, the conceptus from approximately eight weeks after fertilization to the time of birth.

gestation: Prenatal development.

hemisphere: Half of the cerebral cortex of the brain.

mental retardation: Brain damage due to genetic conditions, environmental causes, illness or injury that can affect learning, self-direction and self-care.

miscarriage: The spontaneous aborting of the embryo or early fetus that usually occurs for no known reason.

philtrum: The groove and parallel ridges on the face between the nostrils and upper lip.

placenta: A large organ attached to the uterine lining that allows nutrients and oxygen to pass from mother to fetus via the umbilical cord.

prenatal: Before birth.

stillbirth: Delivery of a dead baby after 20 weeks of gestation.

syndrome: A group of physical signs and symptoms which, when seen together, characterize a single disorder or disease.

teratogen: A substance that adversely affects embryonic or fetal development.

trimester: The time period of three months. Three trimesters occur during pregnancy: the first second and third.

variable: a measurable factor, such as temperature or pressure which can be changed in an experiment.

*Modified from "The Fabulous F.A.S. Quiz Show," The March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation and the Washington State Department of Health.