

EUFASD 2016

12th - 15th
September
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Royal Holloway,
University of London

FOURTH EUROPEAN CONFERENCE ON FASD

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**Royal Holloway, University of
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[42]

Pregnant women's perceptions of information about alcohol use during pregnancy: a qualitative pilot study

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Considering children prenatally exposed to alcohol present substantial challenges to parents, schools, and societies and considering minimum safe dose of alcohol during pregnancy is unknown, WHO, EU and different countries suggest zero consumption. Despite, research shows that there is a substantial number of women who continue to drink.

Taking into consideration that information is the base to make an informed decision about alcohol use during pregnancy, understanding the availability and quality of information available to pregnant women is an issue for research.

As far as we know, in Portugal no studies have looked at the pregnant women's perception of information about alcohol use during pregnancy. This work presents a qualitative pilot study, exploring attitudes of pregnant women regarding: (1) alcohol use during pregnancy; (2) knowledge about the impact of alcohol use during pregnancy; (3) accessibility and quality of information available.

Participants were 13 pregnant women recruited through snowball sampling strategies and at one public health center. After informed consent, in-depth interviews were conducted, transcribed and then thematically analyzed.

Only one participant continue to drink during pregnancy (social use). Pregnant women reported mixed messages and confusion about consequences of prenatal exposure to alcohol and about safe level of consumption, with implications on decision to drink during pregnancy. Mass media and relatives were mentioned as the most important sources of information about alcohol in general. Lack of consistent screening and information from healthcare professionals is other result, but some women recalled receiving advice not to drink alcohol during pregnancy (there is an abstinence official national guideline).

Evidence-based information is the base to make an informed decision about alcohol use during pregnancy. As this study showed, there are a number of limitations with accessibility and quality of information available, including for pregnant women. To ensure that all (pregnant) women are aware of alcohol recommendations for pregnancy, we underline the importance of the different professionals involved in healthcare arena, particularly within pregnancy care setting.