

Can Babies be Born Addicted?

Your baby will not be born addicted. Physical dependence and addiction are not the same thing. Physical dependence can be safely treated after birth.

Babies exposed to opioids during pregnancy may experience Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS). This may also be called Neonatal Opioid Withdrawal Syndrome (NOWS).

NAS or NOWS may require monitoring and treatment but it is temporary and can be managed. This is not addiction.



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Will My Baby Experience Withdrawal?

Maybe. Every infant is different. There is no way to predict if withdrawal symptoms will be severe. Some infants do not experience any symptoms.

Stopping or lowering your dose of medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD) will not reduce the risk of Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) or Neonatal Opioid Withdrawal Syndrome (NOWS) in your baby. This may also put your own recovery at risk.

What are NAS and NOWS?

- NAS or NOWS may occur in newborns exposed to opioids before birth.
- Some signs of NAS or NOWS may include irritability, a constant, high-pitched cry, or tremors.
- NAS and NOWS are temporary and treatable.

How are NAS or NOWS treated?

- You are not alone! Your baby's medical team can help you make a care plan to manage any signs of NAS or NOWS.
- Babies exposed to opioids or MOUD before birth often stay in the hospital for 4 to 7 days.
- You can learn to soothe your baby through skin-to-skin contact. Swaddling, soft lighting, and spending quiet time together will help. Your baby could use a pacifier.
- Some babies with NAS or NOWS may need medication for a short time. This can help manage your baby's symptoms.
- Remember, infants will not become addicted!



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Can I Take Buprenorphine or Methadone (MOUD) While Pregnant?

Yes. These are medications that can treat opioid use disorder (OUD) while you are pregnant.

- OUD should be treated during pregnancy with medication, counseling, and recovery support.
- It is better to take methadone or buprenorphine during pregnancy than to stop OUD treatment. These medications help prevent overdose and death.
- Taking care of yourself is the best way to care for and protect your baby.

Is MOUD going to hurt my baby?

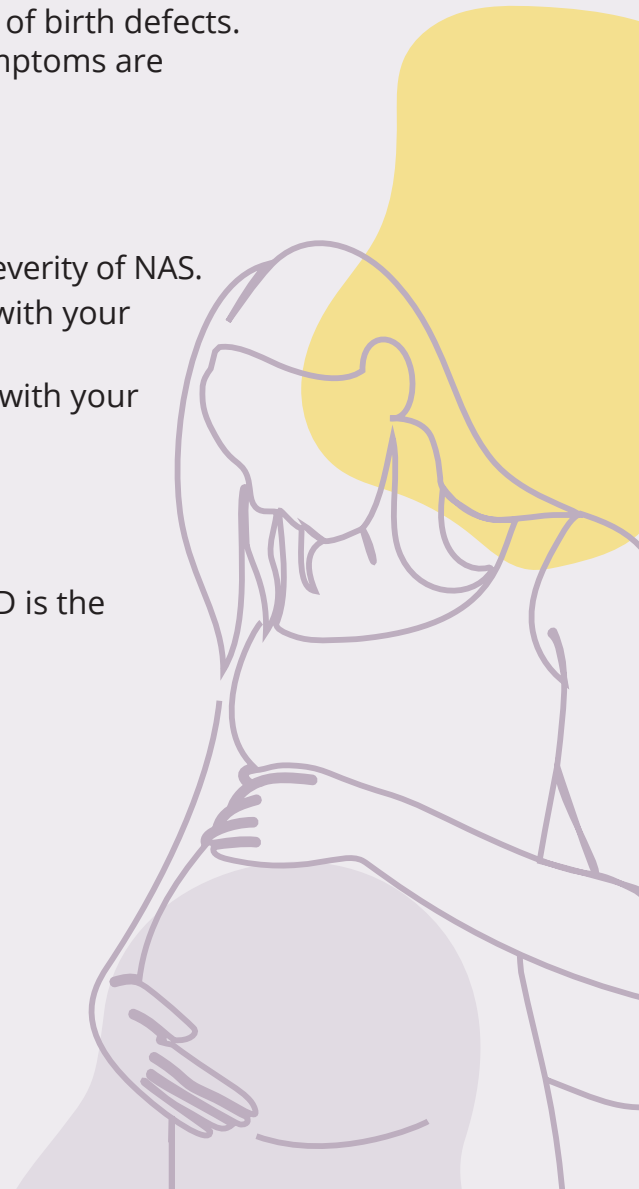
- No. Methadone and buprenorphine do not increase the risk of birth defects. Your baby may show withdrawal symptoms. Withdrawal symptoms are treatable and temporary.

Will I need to increase my dose while pregnant?

- Your dose of medication will not change your baby's risk or severity of NAS.
- It is normal to need your dose of medication adjusted. Talk with your doctor and do not make dose changes on your own.
- For safety, methadone and buprenorphine should be taken with your doctor's guidance.

Methadone or buprenorphine? Is one better?

- Experts agree that the best medication for treating your OUD is the one that works best for you.



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