

Delaware State Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup Opioid Infographic Series

Topic: Effects of Opioid Use During Pregnancy

Women with opioid use disorder and their infants face critical barriers to optimal care, such as potential legal consequences, stigma, lack of education among healthcare professionals, and fragmented systems of care (Savin & Paul, 2016).



Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) is linked to:

(<u>CDC, 2024</u>)

- Maternal death
- Poor fetal growth
- Preterm birth
- Stillbirth
- Specific birth defects
- Neonatal abstinence syndrome

Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome symptoms in babies: (<u>Ko et al., 2016</u>)

- Central nervous system irritability, such as tremors or seizures
- Gastrointestinal dysfunction, such as feeding difficulties
- Temperature instability

Potential long-term effects of NAS: (March of Dimes, 2025)

- Developmental delays
- Motor skills problems
- Learning and behavior problems
- Speech and language problems
- Sleep disorders
- Hearing and vision problems

14 per 1,000

newborn hospitalizations in Delaware involved neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS)*, in 2021.

This is over *two times the national rate* of 6.2 per 1,000 in 2021. (HCUP, 2024)



"Analysis of 2019 survey data found that 6.6% of women reported prescription opioid use during pregnancy. Among these women, 21.2% reported misuse (a source other than a health care provider or a reason for use other than pain)" (Ko et al., 2020)



"Effective interventions for OUD, including medication-assisted treatment (MAT), do exist, and healthy outcomes can occur for both the mother and the infant, **but only when healthcare professionals can recognize and treat SUDs**, which include OUD, and substance exposure in infants" (SAMHSA, 2018)

*NAS is a withdrawal syndrome that occurs in newborns who have been exposed to drugs, *most commonly opioids*, during pregnancy (<u>March of Dimes, 2025</u>)

This infographic series is interactive.

To open the webpage associated with the above information, click on the author's name in parentheses.



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