Alcohol, tobacco and other drugs during pregnancy and breastfeeding
Smoking

If you smoke when you are pregnant, your baby can be born too small. Pregnancy is a good time to give up smoking for good.
Children are more likely to develop chest infections, asthma and ear infections if adults smoke around them.

Everything that you eat, drink and smoke can affect your growing baby, even before they are born.

Ask smokers to smoke outside. Make sure no-one smokes around your baby.
Alcohol

Babies can be born a ‘Grog baby’. Grog babies have severe learning and behaviour problems.

Drinking alcohol when you are pregnant can harm your baby.

There is no safe level of alcohol in pregnancy so don’t drink when you are pregnant.
Drinking and breastfeeding

Alcohol passes into your breastmilk. Babies can’t handle alcohol and it can harm your baby.

The best thing to do is to avoid drinking alcohol at all when you are breastfeeding.

If you are going to drink a small amount, have your drink after you have breastfed your baby or expressed.
Having alcohol can affect how well you can care for your baby. If you are going to drink, arrange for a person you can rely on to take care of your baby – like a grandmother or an auntie who doesn’t drink, give them some breastmilk that you expressed before you started drinking or formula to feed your baby.
Marijuana (gunja, yarndi) and other illegal drugs

If you smoke yarndi while you are pregnant it can affect your baby:

- Babies can have withdrawal symptoms as a newborn.
- As a small child, their sleep and memory can be affected.
- Babies can have problems learning to talk, and learning problems at school later in life.
- Other illegal drugs can do a lot of damage to your baby as well.
- Babies can be born addicted to drugs and have life-long problems.

Don’t smoke yarndi when you are pregnant.
Legal drugs can be harmful

Ask your doctor before taking any medicine – even herbal medicine can hurt your baby.

ALWAYS tell your doctor that you are pregnant or breastfeeding.

For more information contact your local health worker or lactation consultant.