

POSTALCOHOL FETAL INJURY AS AN UNDERESTIMATED REASON OF DEVELOPMENTAL DEFECTS AND NEUROBEHAVIORAL DERAGEMENTS IN CHILDREN

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ABSTRACT – Ethanol and acetaldehyde (major metabolite) are teratogenic agents, which can cause a variety of fetal injuries depending on dose, timing and conditions of drinking alcohol by pregnant women. These injuries are responsible for development of clinical picture of fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS) or fetal alcohol effects (FAE). Diagnosis of FAS comprises inhibition of fetal growth, characteristic neonatal facial signs and/or neurological symptoms, while FAE is a syndrome of neurobehavioral aberrations detected in adolescents. This review deals with diagnostic criteria of FAS/FAE syndromes and biochemical markers of surreptitious use of alcohol in pregnancy. We also reviewed basic effects of ethanol on nutritional state of fetus and postalcohol fetal injuries to central nervous system, heart, liver and digestive tract.

Key words: ethanol, pregnancy, fetus, FAS, FAE.