

Frequent Ask Questions : pictogram "no alcohol during pregnancy"

Q: What are the reference texts ?

Article L.3322-2 of the Code of Public Health (from the law n ° 2005-102 of 11 February 2005 on equal rights and opportunities, the participation and citizenship of disabled persons, Article 5) intended to be included on all packaging units of alcoholic beverages, a " health warning recommending no consumption of alcohol by pregnant women."

This provision only applies to alcoholic beverages (alcoholic strength by volume of more than 1.2 °), and not supplements containing food extracts hydroalcoholic or liqueur chocolates, ...

The decree of 2 October 2006 (NOR: SANX0602395A) of the Ministry of Health, published Oct. 3rd, determines the practical health message labeling on packaging units of alcoholic beverages.

Q: What is the purpose of this measure ?

The aim is to provide better information on the health risks for the fetus, of alcohol consumption during pregnancy.

In fact, alcohol consumption during pregnancy, even off or low, can cause significant risks to the child. Alcohol is the leading cause of non-genetic disability in children and fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS) as a result of fetal exposure to alcohol concentrations during pregnancy for births between 3000 and 5000 by year. Even at very low doses, alcohol passes freely and rapidly from maternal blood to the blood of the fetus through the placenta.

However, the alcoholic molecules have a destructive effect on the fetal brain. Alcohol has a direct toxicity on the nervous system. Apart from the FAS, other consequences of alcohol consumption during pregnancy were identified : increased mortality in twin pregnancies, malformations of the face, blurred vision and severe stunting , and exposure to alcohol during pregnancy, even at very low doses, poses many risks to the fetus.

The only measure that can prevent FAS is total abstinence of alcohol consumption during pregnancy.

Q: What form can take the message intended by the decree of October 2, 2006 ?

The prevention message can take the form of a literal sentence: "The consumption of alcoholic drinks during pregnancy, even in small amounts, can have serious consequences on the health of the child" or a pictogram.

Q: Where can I get the icon "no alcohol during pregnancy ?"

It is available on the website of the Ministry of Health, Youth and Sports at : <http://www.sante.gouv.fr/zero-alcool-pendant-la-grossesse-informer-les-femmes-enceintes-sur-les-dangers-de-l-alcool.html>

Q: When should the message appear on the unit packaging of alcoholic beverages ?

Since October 3rd, 2007, all units of packaging should carry the message. However, products placed on the market or labeled before that date can still be sold until supplies last.

Q: Where does this measure apply ?

This covers all packaging units sold on the French territory.

It does not apply to export, as well as in the strict sense (export to third countries outside the EU), in a broader sense (that is to say towards the EU).

Regarding the "duty-free" zones under customs are an integral part of the French territory, regardless of the tax status applied to products therein. In these areas, alcoholic beverages are sold on the French territory, and must be labeled in accordance with the decree of 2 October 2006.

Q: What about in the DOM and TOM?

The decree of 2 October 2006 applies to overseas departments (DOM: French Guiana, Martinique, Guadeloupe, Réunion and Mayotte), and TOM (St Pierre and Miquelon, St. Martin and St. Barths).

Regarding French Polynesia, the New Caledonia, Wallis and Futuna and the French Southern and Antarctic, the order of October 2, 2006 do not apply to them.

Q: Has it a graphic to meet ?

There is no specific graphic, as the requirements of legibility, visibility and intelligibility established by the decree of 2 October 2006, are respected.

The pictogram "no alcohol during pregnancy" may be degraded black-gray-white.

It must be on a contrasting background.

The order does not require a minimum size for the icon, however it is important to respect the need for intelligibility ("clearly understandable") posed by the order.

Q: Where must the symbol "no alcohol during pregnancy" appear on the container ?

The decree of 2 October 2006 states that the symbol (or the health message) must appear in the same visual field as the alcoholic strength by volume (TAV).

If it necessarily appears , as well as other particulars on the label, nothing prevents to include it several times, especially on cons label.

Therefore, the symbol may be affixed with TAV, cons-label.

Q: The message must be affixed on the overpack ?

It is not mandatory (but possible) to mention the health message on overpacks such as wooden crates, cardboard ... containing bottles or cans of alcoholic beverages.

Q: The symbol "no alcohol during pregnancy" can be affixed as a sticker ?

When needed (flow of label stocks already printed for example) and provisionally, it is possible to affix the symbol "no alcohol during pregnancy" as a sticker, which can optionally be placed outside of the label.

This sticker must still imperatively appear "in the same visual field as the compulsory indication on the alcoholic strength by volume", and of course meet the requirements for visibility, legibility and intelligibility established by the decree of October 2.

This possibility should be understood as a tolerance and it is recommended to eventually include the pictogram on the label.

Q: What are the penalties ?

When not applying to the health message for pregnant women on bottles of alcoholic beverages, provided for in Article L.3322-2 of the code of public health, shall be punished by article L.3351-1 of this Code of 6000 euros fine.

Q: Who controls the application of the measure?

The Directorate General of Health (DGS) is responsible for the implementation of the text, and any violations may be reported by health authorities to the judicial authority.

Moreover, under Article L.3355-1 of the Code of Public Health, associations whose statutory purpose includes the fight against alcoholism and consumer associations are entitled to sue to enforce the provision of the code of public health.

Q: Is the prevention message an isolated measure ?

The implementation of the pictogram is not an isolated measure, but takes place in the framework of a comprehensive public health. It comes as a complement to a series of provisions adopted within the framework of the law of 9 August 2004 on public health policy, which makes mandatory :

- information campaigns on the prevention of FAS, conducted by the National Institute for Prevention and Health Education (INPES) for the general public and pregnant women, but also via health professionals including messages specializing in the medical press
- information, college and high school on the health risks of alcohol consumption during pregnancy
- training of all health professionals and industry professionals medico-social effects of alcohol on the fetus, through
- Conducting a guide to support preventive SAF network (for health professionals, perinatal networks, ...)
- a letter of awareness gynecologists, midwives and professional centers for maternal and child health (MCH)
- in the perinatal Plan, the redesign of maternity book now incorporate a much more accurate information about the risks of alcohol consumption during pregnancy. Clear messages are delivered in the context of "lifestyles" without feeling guilty and anxious expectant mothers.