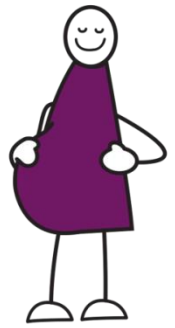


Stop Smoking in Pregnancy



Smoking and the unborn baby

Protecting your baby from tobacco smoke is one of the best things you can do to give your child a healthy start in life. It's never too late to stop smoking. Every cigarette you smoke contains over 4,000 chemicals, so smoking when you are pregnant harms your unborn baby. Cigarettes can restrict the essential oxygen supply to your baby, so their heart has to beat harder every time you smoke.

Benefits of stopping smoking in pregnancy

Stopping smoking will benefit both you and your baby immediately. Harmful gases like carbon monoxide and other damaging chemicals will clear from your body.

When you stop smoking you will have fewer complications in pregnancy

- You are more likely to have a healthier pregnancy and a healthier baby
- You will reduce the risk of stillbirth
- You will cope better with the birth
- Your baby is less likely to be born too early and have to face the additional breathing, feeding and health problems that often go with being premature
- Your baby is less likely to be born underweight: babies of women who smoke are, on average, 200g (about 8oz) lighter than other babies, which can cause problems during and after labour, for example they are more likely to have a problem keeping warm and are more prone to infection
- You will reduce the risk of cot death, also called sudden infant death (find out about reducing the risk of cot death)

Stopping smoking will also benefit your baby later in life. Children whose parents smoke are more likely to suffer from asthma and other more serious illnesses that may need hospital treatment.

The sooner you stop smoking, the better. But even if you stop in the last few weeks of your pregnancy this will benefit you and your baby.

Your biggest supporter



Second-hand (passive) smoke harms your baby

If your partner or anyone else who lives with you smokes, their smoke can affect you and the baby both before and after birth. You may also find it more difficult to stop if someone around you smokes.

Second-hand smoke can also reduce birth weight and increase the risk of cot death. Babies whose parents smoke are more likely to be admitted to hospital for bronchitis and pneumonia during the first year of life. More than 17,000 children under the age of five are admitted to hospital every year because of the effects of second-hand smoke.

To find out more about quitting and to get support, your partner can call the health promotion service on 01209 313419

Nicotine replacement therapy (NRT)

You can use NRT during pregnancy if it will help you stop smoking, and you're unable to do so without it. It's not recommended that you take stop smoking tablets such as Champix or Zyban during pregnancy.

NRT contains only nicotine and none of the damaging chemicals found in cigarettes, so it is a much better option than continuing to smoke. It helps you by giving you nicotine when you would have had a cigarette.

You can be prescribed NRT during pregnancy by your GP or an NHS stop smoking adviser. Or you can buy it over the counter without a prescription from a pharmacy. NRT is available in many different forms.

Before using any of these products, speak to your midwife, GP, a pharmacist or a specialist stop smoking adviser.

Your biggest supporter



Top tips to help you stop smoking

If you want to stop smoking, you can make small changes to your lifestyle that may help you resist the temptation to light up

Think positive

You might have tried to quit smoking before and not managed it, but don't let that put you off. Look back at the things your experience has taught you and think about how you're really going to do it this time.

Make a plan to quit smoking

Make a promise, set a date and stick to it. Sticking to the 'not a drag' rule can really help.

Whenever you find yourself in difficulty say to yourself, "I will not have even a single drag" and stick with this until the cravings pass. Think ahead to times where it might be difficult - a party for instance - and plan your actions and escape routes in advance.

Make a list of reasons to quit

Keep reminding yourself why you made the decision to give up. Make a list of the reasons and read it when you need support. Ex-smoker Chris, 28, says: "I used to take a picture of my baby daughter with me when I went out. If I was tempted, I'd look at that."

Identify when you crave cigarettes

A craving can last five minutes. Before you give up, make a list of five-minute strategies. Try to keep busy when you feel a craving coming on. Why not call a friend or have a shower to take your mind off the craving. Get moving, studies have shown that just a 5 minute walk can help to cut cravings and may help your brain to produce anti-craving chemicals.

Distractions from smoking

Nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) can double your chances of success.

As well as patches, there are tablets, lozenges, gum and a nasal spray. And if you like holding a cigarette, there are handheld products like the inhalator. See your stop smoking pregnancy advisor for more details.

Get some stop smoking support

If friends or family members want to give up too, suggest to them that you give up together.

There is also support available from your local stop smoking service. Did you know that you're up to four times more likely to quit successfully with their expert help and advice?

You can also call the health promotion service on **01209 313419**.

Your biggest supporter

