

Quitting Smoking While Pregnant

Smoking during pregnancy allows nicotine and other chemicals, like carbon monoxide and tar, to pass into your baby's bloodstream. Exposure to these chemicals means less oxygen to the baby. Less oxygen can slow the baby's growth and can damage your baby's heart, lungs, and brain.¹

Risks to the Baby

Smoking while pregnant can cause:

- **Low birth weight.** Babies born weighing less than 5 lbs. 8 oz can have serious health problems. Pregnant women who smoke are nearly twice as likely to have a low-birthweight baby than women who don't smoke.²
- **Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).** Infants are more likely to die of SIDS. This is when a baby less than 1-year-old dies of an unknown cause.¹
- **Learning and behavior problems.** When children are older they are more likely to have learning and behavior problems.³
- **Miscarriage.** Women are more likely to have a miscarriage or a stillbirth if they smoke while pregnant.¹
- **Placenta problems.** The baby's source of food and oxygen can be damaged, which is dangerous to the mother and baby.¹



Benefits of Quitting

Quitting smoking while pregnant can:¹

- Decrease the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)
- Reduce the risk of birth defects, like a cleft lip or palate
- Reduce the chance of miscarriage
- Lower the risk of lung infections
- Increase the chance of full-term pregnancy
- Increase the chance of normal birth weight

What You Can Do

- Make your home and car smoke-free today.
- Quit smoking. Every cigarette you DON'T smoke helps your baby grow healthy.
- Find support from family, friends, neighbors, coworkers, etc.
- Contact MotherToBaby California at (866) 626-6847 or visit www.MotherToBabyCA.org for more information and live chat.

Remember

Every cigarette you don't smoke will help your baby!

¹March of Dimes. Smoking during pregnancy (2015, Dec). Retrieved on 7/11/17 from <http://www.marchofdimes.org/pregnancy/smoking-during-pregnancy.aspx#>

²March of Dimes. Low Birthweight (2014, Oct). Retrieved on 7/11/17 from <http://www.marchofdimes.org/complications/low-birthweight.aspx>

³National Drug Institute on Drug Abuse. Smoking and Pregnancy – What are the Risks? (2012, July). Retrieved on 7/11/17 from <https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/tobacco/smoking-pregnancy%E2%80%94what-are-risks>

Quitting Smoking While Pregnant

Coping strategies

- C** **ravings** last 3-5 minutes on average. Find healthy ways to keep busy.
- O** **utside**. Get out of the house for some fresh air. Take walks or go to a place where you can't smoke, like the mall or the movies.
- P** **repare** for quitting. Cut up healthy snacks to take with you. Have straws, gum, a water bottle and other items on hand.
- I** **nfant**/baby focused. Think of how quitting helps your baby's health. Make a baby book or hang your ultrasound picture.
- N** **urture** yourself. Take a warm (not hot) bubble bath or get a massage. Treat yourself with the money you would have spent on cigarettes.
- G** **et** involved in new hobbies or classes. Learn to crochet or go to a prenatal class.

Avoid excess weight gain

- W** **ater** is important. Try to drink a lot of water each day. It fills you up and can help you fight the urge to smoke.
- E** **xercise** prevents excess weight gain and makes you more flexible and better prepared to give birth.
- I** **ncrease** your metabolism naturally. Stay active and eat well-balanced meals to give your metabolism a boost.
- G** **et** to know your body and what you need. Know the difference between hunger pangs and nicotine cravings.
- H** **ealthy** snacks. Celery and carrot sticks are great substitutes when you crave a cigarette.
- T** **rust** your body. Accept that gaining some weight is part of a healthy pregnancy.

Increase your support system

- F** **ind** a stop smoking buddy to talk with. Your buddy can encourage you and help keep you on track.
- R** **emind** people you are quitting. Ask them to support you and not offer cigarettes.
- I** **nsist** on taking care of your emotional needs. Have a list of family and friends that you can contact when you need to.
- E** **nvironment**. Make your house smoke-free. Ask family and friends to smoke outside.
- N** **on-smokers**. Find non-smoking friends and do what they do instead of smoking.
- D** **o** ask for help. Don't think others know what you need. If you need help with the kids or a ride to the store, ask somebody.
- S** **upport** groups. Join a pregnancy or new moms' group or Nicotine Anonymous.