

# Tobacco Dependency Treatment in Pregnancy

## Women's Health

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# **Stopping Smoking in Pregnancy: The Best Start for You and Your Baby**

This is for you if:

- you smoke and are either already pregnant or thinking about having a baby; or
- you are exposed to tobacco smoke at home.

You may also find it helpful if you are the partner or a relative.

Many women find it difficult to stop smoking, but it is one of the most important things you can do to improve your baby's health, growth, and development. It is also the single most important thing you can do to improve your own long-term health.

This leaflet tells you about the effect of smoking on you and your baby. It tells you about the help and support that you will be offered to stop smoking. It's never too late to stop smoking. When you stop smoking, you and your baby will feel the benefits immediately.

## **Why is smoking in pregnancy harmful to me and my baby?**

Just as smoking is bad for you, babies in the womb can be harmed by tobacco smoke because it reduces the amount of oxygen and nutrients that pass through the placenta from you to your baby.

Smoking when you are pregnant increases your risk of miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy (a pregnancy growing outside the womb), your baby dying in the womb (stillbirth) or shortly after birth (sudden infant death syndrome or SIDS, also known as 'cot death'. or your baby being born with abnormalities. Smoking will limit your baby's growth - the more you smoke, the less healthy your baby will be. A baby that is small due to smoking is more likely to have health problems.

Smoking when you are pregnant also increases the risk of bleeding during the last months of pregnancy and premature birth, when your baby is born before 37 weeks of pregnancy.

## **Does second-hand (passive) smoke harm your baby?**

If your partner or anyone else who lives with you smokes, their smoke can affect you and your baby before and after birth. You may also find it more difficult to stop smoking yourself if someone around you smokes. Second hand smoke can also reduce your baby's birth weight and increase the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), also known as 'cot death'.

There is no safe level of smoking, either for you or your baby. You and your partner will be advised to stop completely - not just cut down. Help is available for you both to stop smoking.

## **What is the carbon monoxide (CO) test?**

Carbon monoxide (CO) levels are higher in women who smoke than women who don't. CO is a poisonous gas that restricts the amount of oxygen getting to your baby. At your first antenatal appointment your midwife will ask you to do a breath test, which will measure your exposure to tobacco smoke. This will be repeated at 36 weeks and some other times it may be required in pregnancy. If you don't smoke but your levels are high, you may have a leaky gas appliance that is causing the CO reading to be at a high level. If so, it is advisable that you have the appliance checked and contact the free **Health and Executive Gas Safety Advice Line on 0800 300 363**.

## **What is nicotine replacement therapy (NRT)?**

You can use nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) 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. NRT is available as patches, gum, nasal spray, lozenges, micro tablets, and fine mist mouth spray. If you have nausea and vomiting, patches may be a better solution.

NRT patches should be used for no more than 16 hours. The best way to remember this is to remove the patch at bedtime. Before using these products, speak to a midwife. You can also contact your tobacco dependency advisor if you have been put in contact with one from ASPH NHS Foundation Trust Hospital.

Remember you are twice as likely to be successful at quitting when you get nicotine replacement therapy in addition to support from a tobacco dependency advisor.

## **Use of e-cigarettes (vaping) in pregnancy**

Smoking tobacco is known to harm your health in many ways. You can reduce these harms by stopping smoking. Vaping is much less harmful than smoking. Vapes, as well as other stop smoking aids, are effective in helping you to stop smoking. If you vape, you should stop smoking completely.

Vaping is not risk free, but nicotine vaping is much less harmful than smoking and can be used as a tool to help you become smoke-free for good. Vapes do not produce tar or carbon monoxide, two of the most damaging elements in tobacco smoke. Vaping liquids come in different nicotine strengths, so you can control how much nicotine you need to help with cravings and other withdrawal symptoms that you will experience when you stop smoking cigarettes.

Make sure you buy your vaping products from a reputable retail shop/outlet so that you can be confident that they are covered by the rules in the UK that cover how and where these products should be available.

Call the **NHS Smokefree helpline on 0300 123 1044** for more information, 9am to 8pm Monday to Friday at a time that suits you. The NHS Smokefree helpline offers free help, support, and advice on stopping smoking and local support services.

## **Additional resources you might find helpful**

NHS Stop smoking in pregnancy at

<https://www.nhs.uk/pregnancy/keeping-well/stop-smoking/>

NHS Smoke free app at

<https://quitnow.smokefree.nhs.uk/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/pregnancy/keeping-well/stop-smoking/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/quit-smoking/nhs-stop-smoking-services-help-you-quit/>

# Patient information leaflets

Ectopic pregnancy

<https://www.rcog.org.uk/for-the-public/browse-all-patient-information-leaflets/ectopic-pregnancy-patient-information-leaflet/>

Having a small baby

<https://www.rcog.org.uk/for-the-public/browse-all-patient-information-leaflets/having-a-small-baby/>

*Opting into the ASPH Tobacco Dependency Treatment Service gives consent for Ashford & St. Peter's Hospital to share your information with NHS England.*

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## Further Information

We endeavour to provide an excellent service at all times, but should you have any concerns please, in the first instance, raise these with the Matron, Senior Nurse or Manager on duty.

If they cannot resolve your concern, please contact our Patient Experience Team on 01932 723553 or email [asp-tr.patient.advice@nhs.net](mailto:asp-tr.patient.advice@nhs.net). If you remain concerned, the team can also advise upon how to make a formal complaint.

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You can use Text Relay to turn telephone communications into text.  
Use the Relay UK app on your phone, tablet or PC.  
You can also use Relay UK via Minicom or Uniphone.

اگر نیاز به ترجمہ دارید، لطفاً با شماره 01932 723553 تماس بگیرید۔

ने उगाठुं उतनमे ची लेउ वै उं विरथा वरवे इस नंघर उे देन वरवे: 01932 723553

اگر آپ اس کا اردو زبان میں ترجمہ چاہتے ہیں، تو براہ کرم اس فون نمبر 01932 723553 پر رابطہ کریں

Se precisa de uma tradução por favor contacte: 01932 723553

আপনার অনুবাদের দরকার হলে এখানে যোগাযোগ করুন : 01932 723553

यदि आपको अनुवाद की ज़रूरत है तो कृपया इस नंबर पर फोन करें: 01932 723553

Jeżeli chcemy, aby te informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić 01932 723553

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