

Smoking and Pregnancy

Smoking during pregnancy is considered to be the biggest contributing factor to the development of complications during a pregnancy².

Cigarette smoke contains over 4000 chemicals such as carbon monoxide, nicotine and cyanide. Tobacco causes long term damage to the lungs, brain and blood of an unborn child and can cause pregnancy emergencies in the mother, by reducing the amount of essential oxygen and nutrients an unborn baby needs for healthy physical and mental development^{1,3}.

By quitting smoking during pregnancy;

You are more likely to conceive naturally and without delay

You are less likely to suffer a miscarriage or ectopic pregnancy

You are less likely to bleed during the pregnancy

You are less likely to deliver your baby prematurely

Your baby is less likely to die at or shortly after birth

Your baby is more likely to be born a healthy weight

Your baby will be more settled and feed better

Your baby is more likely to be discharged home from hospital with you and need less care in hospital



Quitting smoking during pregnancy is the single most effective means of protecting your baby and yourself from the development of serious complications during pregnancy.

It's never too late to quit smoking and gain the health benefits to mothers and babies of all ages. Ask your midwife or Doctor to refer you to the Quitline for specialised advice to help pregnant women and their partners quit smoking, or call **13 QUIT (13 7848)**.

Nicotine Replacement Therapy is now considered precautionary for use in pregnancy and lactation. Quit Tasmania advises all pregnant and breastfeeding clients to seek advice from their medical professional prior to commencing NRT.

References

1. British Medical Association, 2007. *Breaking the cycle of children's exposure to tobacco smoke*. Science and Education Department, British Medical Association, BMA House, London.
2. Lumley J, Oliver S & Waters E; 2003; *Interventions for promoting smoking cessation during pregnancy (Cochrane Review)*; The Cochrane Library, Issue 1. Oxford.
3. Winstanley M, Woodward S & Walker N; 1995; Tobacco in Australia. Facts and Issues. Second edition, Victorian Smoking and Health program; Victoria.