



# Pregnancy and smoking

Fact sheet for pregnant women



If you smoke or are exposed to second-hand smoke while pregnant, your baby is smoking too.

## The risks of tobacco smoke during pregnancy

Tobacco smoke, whether inhaled through smoking or breathing the second-hand smoke around you, is harmful to your baby. This toxic smoke contains thousands of chemical substances.

A baby exposed to tobacco smoke during pregnancy:

- ✓ receives less oxygen, which can affect the development of the heart, lungs, and nervous and digestive systems.
- ✓ has a greater risk of being born with a growth delay and, after birth, of falling victim to sudden infant death syndrome.

And for mom, smoking or being exposed to second-hand smoke increases the risk of miscarriage or premature birth.

## I DON'T SMOKE, but I am exposed to second-hand smoke

**Good for you for not smoking, it's a great decision for you and your baby!**

If your partner is a smoker, don't hesitate to ask them to smoke outside and far away from you. The same goes for your friends and family who smoke. You can remind them that smoking has harmful effects on your baby's health, both before and after birth.

At home or in the car, there are no effective strategies (open window, under a range hood, etc.) to eliminate toxic substances from cigarette smoke in the air. **Make your home and car 100% smoke-free zones!**

For more information, advice and useful tips, visit [smokefreefamily.ca](http://smokefreefamily.ca).



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## I SMOKE, but I would like to smoke less or quit

**Great decision! Being pregnant is the perfect occasion to try to quit.** The desire for a healthy baby can be a great motivator.

Reducing your tobacco consumption is already an improvement. However, it is strongly advised to quit, as no number of cigarettes is safe during pregnancy.

**Find your reasons and think of the benefits of living tobacco-free**, whether for your health, your freedom, physical fitness, or a sense of pride. And what a boost to your family budget! An average smoker (15 cigarettes a day) who butts out can save nearly \$200 a month.

And if you are thinking longer-term, know that children who live in a smoke-free home are less likely to become smokers. A precious gift for their future!

## Need help quitting smoking?

Quitting smoking is not easy, but it's possible, especially with help.

Your pharmacist and your doctor can be great allies in your mission to quit. Ask them about the methods that are suitable during pregnancy.

To resist giving in, remember your reasons and find tricks to overcome your cravings. **The following resources are free and can increase your chances of success.** Don't hesitate to share them with your partner if they smoke or would like to quit.



The **I QUIT NOW** helpline  
1-866-527-7387



The **iquinow.qc.ca** website



The **Quit Smoking Centres**



The **SMAT** text messages



## And what about breastfeeding?

Given that nicotine and other harmful substances pass into breast milk, smoking is not recommended while breastfeeding. However, if you do smoke, breast milk is still the best way to feed your baby until the age of 6 months.

Some precautions are nevertheless recommended to reduce your baby's exposure to undesirable substances. For example,

- ✓ smoke as little as possible;
- ✓ smoke after breastfeeding, not immediately before or during;
- ✓ wait 2 to 3 hours after smoking a cigarette before breastfeeding;
- ✓ don't make your baby wait if it seems hungry, even if not much time has passed since your last cigarette.



**Alcohol, cannabis and e-cigarette should also be avoided during pregnancy and breastfeeding.**

**TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF AND FULLY EMBRACE THE JOYS OF NEW MOTHERHOOD!**

SMOKEFREEFAMILY.CA



QUITCHALLENGE.CA

