

Outstanding Care,  
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Sherwood Forest Hospitals  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Smoking and your pregnancy

Information for patients



love  
bump 



**Maternity  
Services**

*With you every step of the way*

*“Our promise to pregnant smokers is that the midwives, health visitors and other healthcare professionals you meet during your pregnancy won’t judge you for being a smoker. We will do everything we can to help you stop smoking.”*

If at any time you want to discuss stopping smoking you can always talk to your midwife, health visitor or GP for friendly advice on the best way to achieve your goal.

## What should I expect from my health visitor or midwife?

### You should be:

- Provided with information about the risks of smoking and benefits of quitting for you and your baby.
- Encouraged to remain smokefree and referred to a specialist stop smoking service where you can get help to quit.
- Even if you are unable to quit smoking, your health visitor will let you know where to get nicotine replacement therapy to help you keep your home smokefree.

[www.nottsmoking.co.uk](http://www.nottsmoking.co.uk)



## Advice for parents

Smoking during pregnancy and immediately after having the baby harms both the baby and the mother. Stop smoking treatment is available to everyone.

## Three good reasons to quit:

- **For your baby now** – reduced risk of sudden infant death (SIDS), chest infections, asthma, and meningitis.
- **For your next pregnancy** – quit now and you’ll have a much lower chance of miscarriage, stillbirth or having a premature or unwell baby.
- **For you** – more energy, fewer illnesses, more money in your pocket and reduced risk of long-term illness like cancer, lung or heart disease.

# Facts:

1. Smoking more than doubles the risk of stillbirth, but stopping can greatly reduce this risk.

***"I do feel like it's not only benefited like my health, but has benefited my children as well."***

2. Every cigarette has 4000 chemicals which reduce the oxygen reaching your baby. Their heart has to beat harder every time you smoke. By quitting the habit you are more likely to have a healthier pregnancy and a healthier baby.

***"I do feel healthier. I do feel better."***

3. Babies born to mothers who smoke are more likely to be born small. This has short-term health issues and a greater lifetime risk of obesity and diabetes. Stopping smoking now will help your baby's health now and in later life.

***"I had my first baby six weeks early and I didn't stop with him. I stopped this time and everything was fine."***

4. Smoking during pregnancy increases the risk of your baby dying in the first four weeks of their life by 40% and quitting smoking can help reduce this risk.

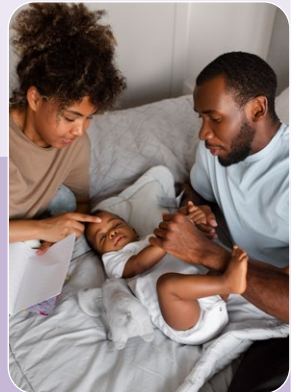
***"I want to take my baby back to a smokefree home and its best to get this sorted before he's born."***

5. It's never too late in pregnancy to stop. It can be difficult, but smoking is much more harmful to your baby than any stress stopping may bring.

***"I feel amazing all round. Like I feel like I've got loads more energy."***

6. Stopping smoking could also result in financial benefits and help you save for the baby.

***"I saved my vouchers for the breast pump, it's like made it achievable cause like, I hit those targets."***



# Myths about smoking in pregnancy

## **Smoking makes the baby smaller and the birth easier**

A smaller, weaker baby will not make birth easier. In fact, it can lead to complications and you may have to stay in hospital longer.

## **If I quit I'll put weight on**

The best way to avoid weight gain is to make sure you eat healthy snacks. And if you go out for a walk, instead of a smoke, both you and your baby will be healthier and happier.

## Smoking stops me being stressed

Smoking actually puts more stress on your body, and your baby every time you smoke and for 15 minutes afterwards. Giving up will improve your mental health.

## I smoked during my last pregnancy and my baby was OK, or my mum smoked and I'm OK

Smoking when pregnant is very dangerous and is thought to cause 40% of baby deaths.

## I'm three months' pregnant already so it's too late to quit

It's never too late. Even stopping in the last few weeks of pregnancy can benefit you and your baby.



## I'll just cut down instead of quitting

It's a start but it won't protect your baby from the harmful chemicals in tobacco smoke.

## I can't stop smoking because my partner/family still smoke

Lots of mums-to-be ask their friends and family not to smoke in the house or around them because second-hand smoke also harms your unborn baby.



## Smoking is my 'me time'

Quitting is difficult, we know. So use the money you save to treat yourself – at the end of the year you could even pay for a holiday.

## I'll use Shisha or Paan instead

Shisha smoking is just as harmful as smoking cigarettes. Paan also contain substances that can cause cancer.

## I'm using an e-cigarette instead of smoking

Electronic cigarettes are not risk free, but they carry a fraction of the risk of smoking. If using an e-cigarette helps you to stay smokefree, it is much safer for you and your baby than continuing to smoke.

## It's okay to smoke at home while being pregnant

Over 80% of cigarette smoke is invisible and stays in the air for several hours after a cigarette has been put out. Quitting smoking completely is the best thing you can do for your baby.



**To get help, please contact your local maternity tobacco dependency team.**

## Further sources of information

NHS Choices: [www.nhs.uk/conditions](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions)

Our website: [www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk](http://www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk)

NCSCCT (National Centre for Smoking Cessation and Training): [www.ncsct.co.uk](http://www.ncsct.co.uk)

## Patient Experience Team (PET)

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

**King's Mill Hospital:** 01623 672222

**Newark Hospital:** 01636 685692

**Email:** [sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net](mailto:sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net)

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email [sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net](mailto:sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net).



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