

Smoking in pregnancy including Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT)

- ***How do you feel about smoking now that you are pregnant?***
- ***Would you like to make a change?***
- ***Can we share some information with you about smoking?***

What is a cigarette?

Cigarettes are made from the dried leaves of tobacco plants. After the leaves are dried they are treated with chemicals and made into cigarettes. Cigarette smoke contains over 4000 chemicals, many of these are poisonous and can cause cancer.

TAR- is a black sticky substance that contains many chemicals. It is the main cause of mouth throat and lung cancer and is what causes the yellowish brown stains on fingers, teeth and ceilings of smoker's homes.

NICOTINE- is the addictive part of the cigarette. It causes the heart to pump faster, it makes the blood pressure go up and it tightens the blood vessels.

CARBON MONOXIDE- is a poisonous gas that passes across the placenta and is absorbed by your baby's blood. Unborn babies have a Carbon monoxide level that is up to twice as high as their mother's level. Carbon monoxide takes up space where oxygen should be so less oxygen is available to your baby.

Why do the staff check my CO level with the breath test?

Carbon monoxide can damage the placenta, and deprive the baby of oxygen which is needed for growth and development. Babies exposed to carbon monoxide from cigarette smoke are more likely to be smaller and weaker when they are born; this can lead to serious health issues at birth in childhood and in later life.

When you smoke in pregnancy the midwives and doctors will talk you through the importance of reducing your carbon monoxide exposure by stopping smoking. They will show you how to use the carbon monoxide monitor and show you your levels in both yours and your baby's system. The good news is that once you have stopped smoking, within 24 – 48 hours, you will have a carbon monoxide reading of a non-smoker!

Carbon monoxide can also come from faulty gas appliances. If you do not smoke but have a high reading please have your appliances checked. Phone the Gas Safety number: 0800 300 363.

Why am I addicted?

Nicotine is a highly addictive and fast acting drug. When a smoker inhales, nicotine gets into their bloodstream, affecting their brain in less than 10 seconds. It has many complex effects on the body, including increasing the heart rate and blood pressure and speeding up the metabolism. It can temporarily make you feel good. Your brain makes changes to cope with the nicotine then when nicotine levels fall between cigarettes you get withdrawal symptoms which include feeling anxious and bad tempered (when you quit this feeling can last for a couple of weeks). You have another cigarette to get rid of that feeling temporarily until the level falls again. So as you can see smoking only helps you to cope with the feeling of anxiety and bad temper that the nicotine withdrawal has caused.

Nicotine does not cause cancer; it is the tar and other toxins within a cigarette that can cause cancers and other serious diseases.

Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) products release a low dosage of nicotine over a sustained period and therefore help to reduce nicotine cravings and withdrawal symptoms without those 4000 harmful chemicals and tar.

Why do the midwife and doctor want me to stop smoking?

Midwives and doctors really worry when women smoke in pregnancy because we know that smoking in pregnancy can contribute to slow growth of the baby, premature birth, stillbirth, low birth weight and sudden infant death syndrome (cot death). A baby's health can be affected before it is born but a pregnant smoker is also putting her unborn child at risk in later life. The child will be more likely to get chest infections, coughs, colds, asthma and glue ear.

This information can be surprising and worrying but you can change this by not smoking.

What might help me to stop?

- You are 2 x more likely to stop if you meet with a specialist advisor and get their support
- You are 2 x more likely to stop if you use Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT)
- 4 x more likely if you do both!

If you live in Dewsbury area

You can go to your GP or pharmacy for support and visit www.kirklees.gov.uk/smokingcessation for more information. You can phone the NHS stop smoking service number: 0300 123 1044 for support. NHS choices <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/smoking-pregnant/>

If you live in Pontefract and Wakefield area (or have a GP in this area)

You can be referred by staff to the specialist pregnancy stop smoking advisors at Yorkshire Smoke free Wakefield. You can contact them on: 01924-252174 or see <http://wakefield.yorkshiresmokefree.nhs.uk/>

You can phone the NHS stop smoking service number: 0300 123 1044 for support.

NHS choices - <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/smoking-pregnant/>

Licensed NRT available for pregnant women

Although no medicine is completely risk-free, a licence indicates that all the proper safety and quality checks have been carried out and the product is safe to use for the purpose intended. With medical advice, these licensed NRT products can be used in pregnancy.

Nicotine patches - If you do choose a patch, only use them for 16 hours during the day.

Nicotine gum - (not liquorice flavour) When you chew nicotine gum, the nicotine is absorbed through the lining of your mouth.

Microtabs - These are small nicotine tablets that dissolve quickly under your tongue.

Lozenges - Lozenges are sucked slowly to release the nicotine and take about 20-30 minutes to dissolve.

Inhalators - Inhalators look like a plastic cigarette. They release nicotine vapour, which is absorbed through your mouth and throat. If you miss the 'hand to mouth' aspect of smoking, these may suit you.

Nasal spray - The nasal spray delivers a swift dose of nicotine that is absorbed through the lining of your nose.

Mouth spray - The mouth spray delivers a quick dose of nicotine that is absorbed through the lining of your mouth.

Pregnant women are advised to avoid liquorice flavoured NRT products. Although there is no known risk from small amounts of liquorice flavouring, the manufacturers advise caution. This is based on information on the adverse effects associated with excessive amounts of liquorice root.

What about E cigarettes?

Although the safety of any product cannot be guaranteed, especially in pregnancy, it is true that at this time more people are stopping smoking with e cigarettes than any other method.

Public Health England suggests that using an E cigarette is 95% safer than tobacco smoking.

Always use a reputable high street shop as there are regulations in place for shops.

I will just cut down.....

Think about what makes you want to cut down?

Lots of women cut down on cigarettes when they find out they are pregnant, this suggests that they understand that there is a level of harm. However, evidence tells us that only completely stopping smoking protects the unborn baby and the mother from the harm that smoking causes.

Studies have shown that women who cut down on their cigarette use while pregnant have not necessarily reduced their exposure to the toxins associated with smoking. Smokers who cut down often inhale more deeply and take more puffs, so the same numbers of chemicals pass through to the baby.

Why might I want to stop?

- My health
- My baby's health
- The money £10 x 365 days = £3650 (think what you could buy!)
- The smell
- The decorating
- The wrinkles
- For my children
- To prove my family, friends or partner wrong
- It is time
- The pride I would feel
- Insert your own reason here _____

Why is this hospital smoke free?

- This is now commonplace in hospitals and prisons too
- We are in the business of trying to keep people healthy
- Smoking has serious health risks
- We know that seeing smoking encourages smoking
- Non smokers should be protected from second hand smoke.

How will I cope with that when I am in hospital?

We have a free in house stop smoking advisor service at Pinderfields. You can go to them or they will come to you on the ward. Staff can phone on: 01924 541286 or extension 51286.

Whilst in hospital you can have a NRT patch to help with the nicotine withdrawal (remember that is the bit you are addicted to). When pregnant or breastfeeding this patch should be put on in the morning and kept on for 16 hours. **Remove for 8 hours at night when pregnant or breastfeeding.**

Remove the packaging and the adhesive cover and apply to clean dry skin. The patch should be placed in different areas each day to avoid irritation. You can use your back, arms, legs and shoulders.

Why is a smoke free home important?

Smoke free homes are also really important! Children breathing in other people's cigarette smoke results in thousands of GP visits and hospital admissions each year. Over 80% of cigarette smoke is invisible. If anyone smokes near you, you will be exposed to second hand smoke.

Smoking in the home significantly increases the risk of Sudden Infant Death (cot death).

Second hand smoke is dangerous because the harmful gases and chemicals are inhaled by you and your baby. Babies and children should always be in smoke free air. If someone wants to smoke in your home, ask them to go outside.

Does your partner smoke?

If you're a new parent or about to become a parent why not help your partner and quit smoking too. Couples who quit smoking together have more chance of success.

Would you want your children to smoke?

Did you know that children who grow up in a house with smokers are up to 3 x more likely to smoke than those who don't.

Finally

We know that stopping can be hard.

We hope you found this information useful and if it helped or inspired you to make the change please let us know.

We are committed to providing high quality care. If you have a suggestion, comment, complaint or appreciation about the care you have received, or if you need this leaflet in another format please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service on: **01924 542972** or email: **myh-tr.palsmidyorks@nhs.net**

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Published Sept 2018
Review Date 2021



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