

Congratulations on becoming pregnant

One of the most important changes you can make, to improve your health and protect your baby is to give up smoking.

Why is now the perfect time to stop smoking?

Your doctor or midwife will have talked to you about the benefits of quitting smoking during your pregnancy and whether you decide to quit or not, don't be surprised to be asked about your smoking throughout your pregnancy. The good news is that quitting now will mean that you're giving your baby the best start and you will be healthier throughout your pregnancy and when the baby is born.

What happens to my baby when I smoke?

Smoking makes it harder for your baby to get the oxygen and nourishment it needs. It can also place additional stress on your baby's heart and affects the development of its lungs. Every time you smoke a cigarette, over 7,000 toxic chemicals get in to your bloodstream and pass through to your baby. These chemicals can harm your baby and cause problems not just while you are pregnant but after the baby is born as well, including:

- Stillbirth
- Miscarriage
- Premature (early) birth
- Cot death
- Low birth weight and a baby who is underdeveloped
- Birth defects
- Glue ear
- Behavioural problems such as attention and hyperactivity disorders
- Reduced educational performance
- Asthma



What if my partner smokes too?

If your partner smokes, this will also affect your baby's health as you may be exposed to the smoke they exhale. By quitting together you will be able to support each other and will be taking a positive step towards protecting your baby from the harmful effects of second-hand smoke.

Why not quit together?

The moment you both stop smoking you'll be protecting the health of your baby. If your partner or anyone else in the household would like to quit, speak to your midwife or stop smoking expert about them being referred to Help Me Quit. Alternatively, they can contact a member of the Help Me Quit team:



Call 0800 085 2219



Request a call back online www.helpmequit.wales/quit-now



Text HMQ to 80818

Second-hand smoke

Whenever a smoker lights up, second-hand smoke is produced. This is the smoke breathed out by the smoker, plus the smoke created by the lit end of the cigarette.

Exposure to second-hand smoke:

- Doubles the risk of cot death for babies who live with smokers
- Doubles the risk of bacterial meningitis
- Increases the risk of lower respiratory infections and middle ear disease in children

Research shows that children who live with smokers are more likely to try smoking themselves.

Information to help you quit and stay quit

Ask your midwife or stop smoking expert for a copy of the Passport to Smokefree booklet. In the booklet you'll find lots of useful information to help you while quitting, including preparing to quit, what to expect when you give up smoking and the benefits of quitting and how to stay quit for good.



Stop smoking medication and pregnancy

For pregnant smokers, the use of stop smoking medication is better than continuing to smoke but only when quitting without medication has failed. Stop smoking aids other than patches would be the first option but patches can be used as long as they aren't left on overnight and not used for longer than 16 hours in a 24 hour period. Prescription only medication such as Champix and Zyban should not be used if you are pregnant or breastfeeding. Talk to your stop smoking expert who can help you choose which licensed stop smoking medication you would like to use.

Myth busters



Can I cut down the number of cigarettes I smoke rather than stop completely?

Cutting down may seem like a good idea but you will be doing something called 'compensatory smoking'. This means that, without realising it, you inhale more deeply or smoke more of each cigarette to compensate for smoking fewer cigarettes. This is bad for you and your baby as you are still inhaling harmful tobacco smoke and remain addicted to nicotine. We recommend stopping completely because, although tough at first, you and your baby will soon feel the benefits.

I'm coming to the end of my pregnancy so what's the point in stopping now?

It is never too late to quit smoking. Quitting at any time during pregnancy reduces the risk of harm to your baby. However, planning to quit as early as you can means a better start to life for your baby.

What about smoking and breastfeeding?

Breastfeeding will give your baby a good start in life. If you quit smoking, you will no longer be passing on nicotine and other poisons from cigarette smoke to your baby through your breast milk. You will also cut down your baby's exposure to tobacco smoke, which will help protect your child's health. After the birth of your baby, smoking by either parent increases the risk of cot death and other health problems.

Smoking relaxes me and I know giving up smoking will be stressful. Surely it's better for my baby if I stay relaxed?

Smoking can release a drug in the brain that makes your body feel relaxed but it also speeds up your heart rate and increases your blood pressure. Smoking also cuts down the amount of oxygen and food reaching your baby. If you continue to smoke it is harmful to your baby and will not lower your stress levels. In fact after 3-4 weeks of quitting smoking most smokers say they are more relaxed and less stressed.

Is it true that if I carry on smoking, my baby will be smaller so I will have an easier birth?

As smoking can cause your baby to have a low birth weight, they may be smaller but they are likely to be underdeveloped and have other health problems. Having a smaller baby does not mean you will have an easier birth and continuing to smoke can cause health problems for you and your baby.

My partner still smokes so is it okay that he is allowed to smoke in one room?

Standing by an open window or door to smoke or smoking in another room in the house won't protect you and your baby. Smoke can stay in the air for up to three hours after someone has finished a cigarette, even if they leave a window or door open. Even if you only allow smoking in one room, the smoke will spread to the rest of the house, exposing others to second-hand smoke. If your partner isn't ready to quit smoking or you have visitors to your home who smoke, they should be asked to go outside to have a cigarette. The only way to protect yourself and your baby from second-hand smoke is to keep your home completely smoke-free.

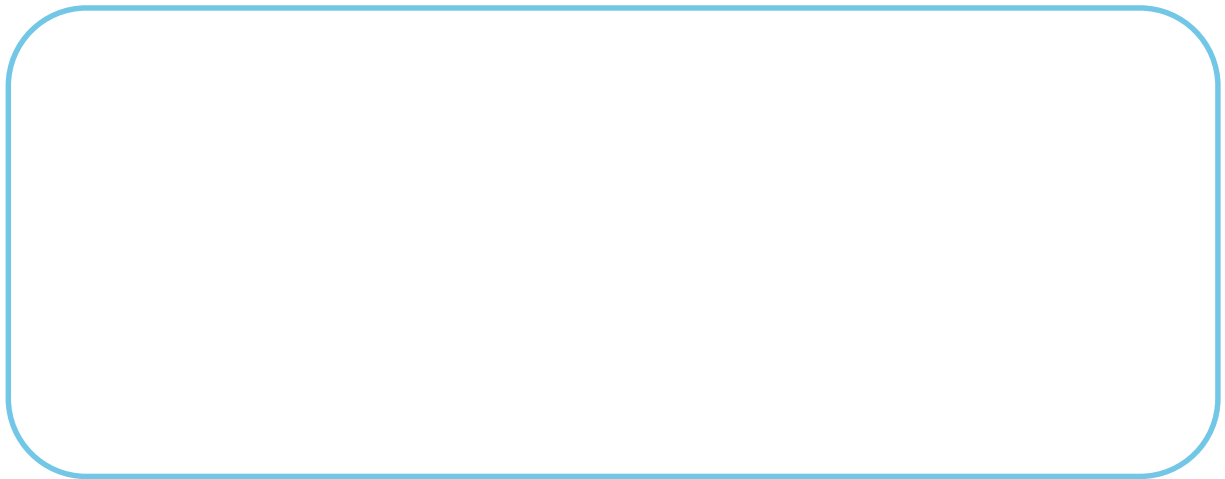
I've tried to quit before so will I be able to use the service again?

Of course you can. You can access the service as many times as you need to. It's great that you keep trying to stop smoking. You are obviously really committed to improving your health and the health of your baby by breaking free of the addiction. Think of your previous quit attempts as new learning experiences and positive steps towards becoming smoke-free.

Never give up giving up

Support and advice between sessions

Your stop smoking expert is there to help you during your quit journey. If you need advice between sessions, you can contact:



If you can't contact your stop smoking expert, please ring Help Me Quit on **0800 085 2219** to speak to someone who can help you.