



## Need Help Putting Out That Cigarette?

If you are pregnant and you smoke,  
this guide will help you quit smoking  
and stay smoke-free.

### **Smoke-Free Families**

Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research  
CB# 7590, 725 Airport Road  
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-7590  
(919) 843-7663 • (919) 966-5764 Fax  
[www.smokefreefamilies.org](http://www.smokefreefamilies.org)



## Need Help Putting Out That Cigarette?

This booklet was written by an ex-smoker and mother of two and by experts who help pregnant women stop smoking.

### SMOKE-FREE FAMILIES:

#### Innovations to Stop Smoking During and Beyond Pregnancy

National Dissemination Office  
Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research  
CB# 7590, 725 Airport Road  
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-7590  
Phone: (919) 843-7663 • Fax: (919) 966-5764  
Email: [smokefreefamilies@unc.edu](mailto:smokefreefamilies@unc.edu)  
Web site: [www.smokefreefamilies.org](http://www.smokefreefamilies.org)

## Table of Contents

### WHY QUIT?

Benefits for Your Baby.....	3
Benefits for You .....	4
Facts about Quitting During Pregnancy.....	5

### PREPARING TO QUIT

Knowing Your Reasons for Quitting.....	7
Changing Your Daily Habits .....	8
Keeping Your Hands and Mouth Busy.....	9
Dealing with Negative Feelings.....	10
Coping with Withdrawal .....	11
Handling Others Smoking Around You.....	13
Rallying Support from Others .....	14
Helping Yourself Feel Better .....	16

SETTING A QUIT DATE .....	19
---------------------------	----

HOW TO HANDLE "SLIPS" .....	21
-----------------------------	----

AFTER YOUR BABY IS BORN .....	22
-------------------------------	----

HOW TO GET MORE HELP .....	23
----------------------------	----



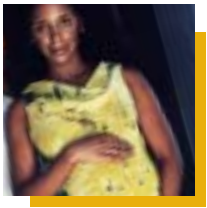
## WHY QUIT? BENEFITS FOR YOUR BABY

Quitting smoking during your pregnancy:

- Increases the amount of oxygen your baby will get
- Increases the chances your baby's lungs will work well
- Lowers the risk that your baby will be born too early
- Increases your chances of having a normal weight, healthy baby
- Increases the chances your baby will come home from the hospital with you

Carbon monoxide and other chemicals from cigarettes get into the baby's blood. They can harm the baby and limit the baby's growth.

*"I didn't think it [quitting smoking] was that difficult once I set my mind to it and said 'O.K., I'm going to set them down'. Before I'd never really had a reason, and being pregnant really gave me a reason to want to quit because I didn't want [my son] to be low birth weight and I sure didn't want him to be born early." — Emily, who quit smoking during pregnancy.*



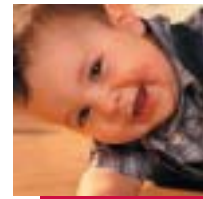
## WHY QUIT? BENEFITS FOR YOU

Quitting smoking during pregnancy:

- Gives you more energy and helps you breathe easier
- Saves you money that you can spend on other things
- Makes your clothes, hair, and home smell better
- Makes your food taste better
- Lets you feel good about what you've done for yourself and your baby

Quitting smoking early in pregnancy is best, but quitting at any time will help you and your baby. It's never too late to quit smoking during your pregnancy.

Your prenatal health care team can tell you more about the benefits of quitting for you and your baby. They can also help you use the tips in this booklet as part of an overall quitting plan for you.



## FACTS ABOUT QUITTING DURING PREGNANCY

- Many pregnant women are tempted to cut down the number of cigarettes they smoke instead of quitting. Cutting down to less than 5 cigarettes a day can reduce risk, but quitting is the best thing you can do for you and your baby.
- After just one day of not smoking, your baby will get more oxygen. Each day that you don't smoke, you are helping your baby grow.
- During the first few weeks after quitting, cravings and withdrawal symptoms may be strongest. You can reduce the length of each craving for a cigarette by distracting yourself (by keeping your hands, mouth, and mind busy).
- Withdrawal symptoms are often signs that your body is healing. They are normal, and will lessen in a couple of weeks.
- Weight gain during pregnancy is normal. If you are worried about gaining weight when you quit smoking, now is an ideal time to quit. The weight you gain is not as bad for you as the risk you take by smoking.

If you are thinking about quitting, it helps to prepare. The next few pages will guide you.



## PREPARING TO QUIT KNOWING YOUR REASONS FOR QUITTING

List your main reasons for quitting smoking here. Keeping them in mind will help you get ready to quit.

- 1) .....
- 2) .....
- 3) .....
- 4) .....

When you're getting ready to quit, it also helps to think about the times you usually smoke. These are the times you will need to find something else to do instead.

When do you smoke?

- 1) .....
- 2) .....
- 3) .....
- 4) .....



## CHANGING YOUR DAILY HABITS

List 3 daily habits you can change to cut your chances of smoking:

Instead of smoking when I:	I will try doing this:
1) _____	1) _____
2) _____	2) _____
3) _____	3) _____

Examples of possible changes:

If you smoke when you:	Try doing this:
Drink coffee	Have hot chocolate or herbal tea
Finish a meal	Get right up, take a walk, or go into another room
Watch TV	Do something else with your hands (start a craft) and mouth (chew gum, eat a hard candy)
Need to relax or take a break	Take a nonsmoking break or walk, take a bubble bath, call a friend, do your nails, ask a friend to babysit for 30 minutes – even if you stay home

*"I try to do things to keep my mind off smoking. I take my son for a walk, read a book, or find something to work on."*

— Florence, who quit smoking during pregnancy.



## KEEPING YOUR HANDS AND MOUTH BUSY

List 4 things you can do with your hands and mouth besides smoking:

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_

Examples of ways to keep your hands and mouth busy:

### Your hands:

- Knit or sew
- Play with a rubber band
- Hold a pen or pencil
- Draw or doodle
- Squeeze a soft rubber ball
- Work on a craft project
- Decorate your baby's room
- Message your fingers or hands

### Your mouth:

- Chew gum
- Eat some fresh fruit
- Use a straw or toothpick
- Suck on hard candy
- Try a cinnamon stick
- Sip water or juice
- Have a frozen fruit bar
- Have some popcorn

*"I've learned to occupy my hands and mouth with finger foods, carrot sticks, little pieces of apple, popcorn, Tootsie Pops®, and jelly beans... I finger paint with Jonathan, which is very messy, but it's better than holding a cigarette."*

— Tamar, who's trying to quit smoking during her pregnancy.



## DEALING WITH NEGATIVE FEELINGS

List 3 negative feelings that make you want a cigarette and ways to deal with them instead of smoking:

Instead of smoking when I feel:	I will try doing this:
1) _____	1) _____
2) _____	2) _____
3) _____	3) _____

Examples of ways to deal with negative feelings:

If you smoke when you feel:	Try doing this:
Stressed or nervous	Go for a walk; take a hard candy break; remind yourself what you do well
Bored or lonely	Talk to a friend; plan a baby project; do something you enjoy; listen to music
Angry or upset	Write down your feelings; take a walk; talk to a friend

*"Sometimes I feel like something is missing, and I realize that I'm missing a cigarette. But I recognize it, I talk about it, and I move on."*

— Stephanie, who quit smoking during pregnancy.



## COPING WITH WITHDRAWAL

Some people have withdrawal symptoms for a few weeks after quitting. They are your body's normal reaction to quitting. Below are common withdrawal symptoms and some ways to cope with them:



Withdrawal symptom:	Try doing this:
Feeling grumpy	Tell others it's a withdrawal symptom; be easy on yourself; go for a walk
Cough and sore throat	It's a sign your lungs and throat are clearing; take cough drops; sip warm tea
Hunger	Eat low-fat snacks like fruit, popcorn or pretzels; suck on hard candy; drink lots of water
Dizziness and headaches	Get fresh air; sit when you feel dizzy; take a nap
Hard time paying attention	Take a walk; work in short bursts rather than for long periods; get lots of sleep
Constipation	Eat more fruit, veggies, and bran; drink lots of water



**Withdrawal symptom:**

Restlessness

**Try doing this:**

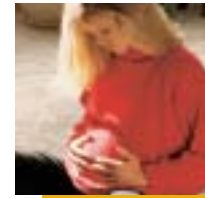
Go for a walk; keep hands busy; avoid caffeine

Trouble sleeping

Avoid caffeine; get more exercise; go to bed only when tired; if you can't sleep, get up and read or do something you enjoy until you feel sleepy

These symptoms are normal and will end soon. Your body is healing, and you are becoming a healthy ex-smoker.

*If you are having trouble with withdrawal symptoms, talk with your prenatal care team.*



## DEALING WITH OTHERS SMOKING AROUND YOU

Being around someone while they are smoking can put you at high risk for having a cigarette. It's a high risk because you see and smell the cigarette and because cigarettes are right there within reach. Think about these ways to handle these times:

- Ask others not to smoke around you, now that you're pregnant
- Ask friends and family to help by never smoking in the house; if this won't work, make some of the rooms in the house, including the baby's room, off-limits for smoking
- Make your home and cars non-smoking areas; ask smokers to smoke outside your home or car
- Leave the room when others light a cigarette
- Plan ways to distract yourself when someone else is smoking
- Keep your hands and mouth busy
- Spend more time in places that are smoke-free

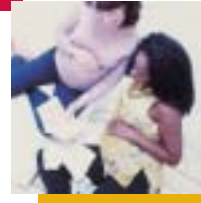




## RALLYING SUPPORT FROM OTHERS

When you quit smoking, it helps to get support from people around you. Here are ways that others might help you:

- Tell your prenatal care team about your quitting plans — they can be a big help
- Ask others to not smoke around you
- Ask others to be patient with you, especially if you are feeling grumpy or tense
- Ask others to help you with your chores during the first few weeks after you quit to ease your stress
- Ask others to remind you how well you are doing not smoking
- Reach out for help and comfort from friends and family who have quit and know what you're going through



List the people you will ask to help you. Tell them how they can help.

**Name:**

**Phone number:**

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....



## HELPING YOURSELF FEEL BETTER

List 4 ways you can reward yourself while you are quitting:

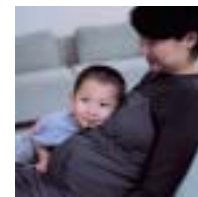
- 1) .....
- 2) .....
- 3) .....
- 4) .....

Examples of possible rewards:

- |                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Go shopping                          | Go for a walk or bike ride                          |
| Ask for a back rub                   | Get your hair done                                  |
| Have some frozen yogurt or ice cream | Buy a plant, some flowers or your favorite magazine |
| Rent a video                         | Call or visit a friend                              |
| Paint your nails                     | Play a game   |
| Listen to your favorite music        |   |

**At this point, you have prepared yourself for quitting. The next step is to set a Quit Date.**

*"Quitting smoking was hard, but I felt it was the best thing to do. It's the smartest thing for any pregnant woman to do."*  
 — Heather, who quit smoking during pregnancy.



## SETTING A QUIT DATE

You are now ready to set a Quit Date. Pick a day coming up soon.

MY QUIT DATE IS: .....

The day before your Quit Date, get rid of your cigarettes and ashtrays. Review your quitting plans in this booklet to remind yourself of:

- Your reasons for quitting
- How you will change your daily habits
- How you will keep your hands and mouth busy
- How you will deal with negative feelings
- How you will cope with withdrawal
- How you will handle others smoking
- How you will reach out for help from your prenatal care team, family and friends
- Who else you have asked to help you
- How you will make yourself feel better, and pamper yourself

*Do something fun on your quit day.*



## HOW TO HANDLE “SLIPS”

- After you quit smoking, it is best not to tempt yourself with even one puff. That’s because each time you smoke, you increase the chances of wanting a cigarette in the future.
- If you do “slip” and have a cigarette, don’t give up. A “slip” is not a failure.
- Review your reasons for quitting. Think about how you can cope with the craving to smoke in the future.
- Renew your commitment to quitting. Ask for help from others who want to see you succeed.

*A “slip” is a mistake, not a failure.*



## AFTER YOUR BABY IS BORN

Staying smoke-free is the best thing you can do for your baby and yourself.

If you stay quit, your baby will:

- Get fewer chest colds, coughs and ear infections
- Have fewer asthma and wheezing problems
- Be at lower risk for SIDS (crib death)
- Breathe better and grow better
- Be less likely to become a cigarette smoker

You will have more energy, fewer health problems, save money, and feel pride in your success.

Stay in touch with your doctor and talk with your baby's doctor about ways you can stay smoke-free, and the methods that may work best for you after the baby is born.



## HOW TO GET MORE HELP



If you need more help, talk with your prenatal care team or your baby's doctor about your smoking and ask for help in quitting. They may be able to provide you with counseling, or refer you to counseling programs in your area.

Nicotine gum and patches and other quit smoking aids are generally not recommended for women who are pregnant or breastfeeding because their safety for your baby is not known. Your prenatal care team can tell you more about what is right for you.

For extra help quitting smoking during pregnancy 24 hours a day 7 days a week, you can call the Great Start Quitline, managed by the American Cancer Society, toll-free at 1-866-66-START.

You can also get help by calling your state's Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies phone line at 1-800-311-BABY (English) or 1-800-504-7081 (Spanish).

*"Talking to the nurse helped a lot, just hearing the facts about what happens to the baby, what smoking does to it as you get further along – it just didn't feel right to smoke. I set a quit date that day for two weeks out, but quit before I even got there."*

— Tammy, who quit smoking during pregnancy with the help of her prenatal care team.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Content based on "If You Smoke and Are Pregnant," a self-help workbook distributed by North Carolina's "First Step Campaign" - a collaborative effort between the N.C. Healthy Start Foundation and the N.C. Division of Public Health, Women's and Children's Section.

Originally written by Carla Weinfeld, MPH, MSW and originally designed by Annette B. Hall.

Content revised July 2001 for Smoke-Free Families with support from

**The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Princeton, NJ by:**

Cathy L. Melvin, PhD, MPH

Laura J. Solomon, PhD

Special thanks to:

Dianne Barker, MHS

Sharon Phelan, MD

Harriett Bennett, MPH

Catherine Rohweder, MPH

Lyndon Haviland, DrPH

Wendy Root, MPH

Cheryl Healton, DrPH

Amber Hardy Thornton, MPH, CHES

C. Tracy Orleans, PhD

Penny Rigler, Porter Novelli

## Notes



Notes



Notes

