

Smoking

Smoking can hurt your baby. When you are pregnant, the air you breathe is important to your baby. If you smoke, your baby will not get the proper oxygen he or she needs to grow and develop to its fullest. If you stop smoking during pregnancy, it will increase the chances that your baby will be born healthy.

Q: What is smoking?

Smoking involves inhaling of ignited tobacco products, or chewing tobacco directly. Nicotine is a harmful substance to you and your baby, and all types of legal smoking contain some element of Nicotine. The safest course to take is not to smoke at all when you are pregnant. There are a wide variety of tobacco products that can be smoked, all of which are harmful to your developing baby, including:

- ▶ Cigarettes
- ▶ Pipes
- ▶ Cigars
- ▶ Chewing Tobacco

Q: How can smoking be harmful while I am expecting?

Clearly, non-smokers have healthier babies than smokers. When you smoke, the Nicotine in the tobacco decreases the amount of oxygen the unborn child receives. This has a negative effect on the baby's development and weight gain. Smokers are twice as likely to deliver low birth weight infants, which can present a host of serious complications at birth.

If you smoke while you are pregnant, you are placing yourself at a greater risk for Diabetes, Miscarriage, Stillbirth, and future infertility. You place your baby at a greater risk for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), Asthma and other breathing problems, as well as the complications of low birth weight.

Q: If I quit smoking while I am pregnant, will these odds improve?

Absolutely! If you stop smoking during your pregnancy, it will increase the chances that your baby will be born healthy.

Q: What kind of treatment is available?

There are local programs, free of charge, to offer help in quitting smoking:

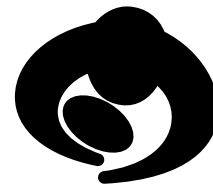
Nicotine Anonymous
813-878-2104

Freedom From Smoking
813-962-4448

Quit Line Helpline
1-800-LUNG-USA

The ZEP website provides valuable information and resources.

Visit www.zeroexposure.org.



ZERO Exposure Project

An Initiative of the Healthy Start Coalition of Hillsborough County, Inc.