



EFFECTS OF TOBACCO SMOKE DURING PREGNANCY, WHILE BREASTFEEDING AND ON YOUNG CHILDREN

- Women who smoke during pregnancy are about twice as likely to have a baby that is born either prematurely or smaller than average. Pregnant women often exposed to second-hand smoke are more likely to have babies with more health problems.
- Smoking has been shown to cause various problems during pregnancy including: miscarriage, stillbirth, placental problems (organ that provides food to the baby in the womb).
 - Every time a pregnant smoker has a cigarette, her baby gets less food and oxygen.
 - The baby is affected by tobacco and second-hand smoke whether you breastfeed or bottle-feed.
 - Babies who are around smoke are more likely to refuse feedings, to be cranky and to spit up (whether they are breastfed or bottle-fed).
- Mothers who breastfeed and smoke must be aware that they are passing harmful chemicals such as nicotine to their babies in breast milk. This can cause irritability and poor sleeping habits in infants.
- Smoking may decrease the amount of milk produced.
- Babies of smokers are twice as likely to die of SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome) in the first few months of life.
- Young children are particularly vulnerable to the toxic effects of second-hand smoke because their airways are smaller, their immune systems are immature and they breathe faster.
- Children who are exposed to second-hand smoke can have: eye, nose, and throat irritation (cough, excess phlegm, wheeze); an increase in allergy and asthma symptoms; up to three times the normal risk of heart disease; up to three-and-a-half times the normal risk of chronic middle ear infection; and a greater likelihood of respiratory illness, including pneumonia and bronchitis.

IT'S NOT TOO LATE!

Things to do: Quit if you can; smoke less; smoke after breastfeeding rather than before; eliminate your baby's exposure to tobacco smoke.

By quitting or significantly reducing smoking and eliminating exposure to second-hand smoke, the ill effects of tobacco during pregnancy and breastfeeding can be largely prevented or reversed. After birth, let your child begin life smoke-free.



For more information, please contact the Eastern Ontario Health Unit at 933-1375 or at 1 800 267-7120 and ask for Health Line. Visit our website at www.eohu-bseo.on.ca.

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