

# Smoking and Your Baby

Secondhand smoke is the smoke from the burning end of a cigarette, pipe or cigar, and the smoke exhaled by the smoker. Secondhand smoke exposes your baby to toxic chemicals that can cause serious health problems. In fact, babies exposed to this smoke are more likely to die before their first birthdays.

Give your baby a healthy start by quitting smoking and not letting others smoke around you or your baby.

- Set rules for people who smoke to always go outside.
- Never allow smoking in the car, even when the window is open.
- Do not spend time in places or homes that allow smoking.
- Find smoke-free places to eat when you go out.
- Smoke that lingers on clothing can also be a hazard for babies. Have anyone who will hold the baby change their shirt if it smells like smoke or place a blanket over their clothing.

## How it helps your baby

Babies who live in smoke-free homes often have:

- Fewer coughs and chest colds.
- Lower chances of getting bronchitis or pneumonia.
- Fewer ear infections.
- Have asthma attacks less often and less severe, if they have asthma.
- Lower chances of dying from SIDS.

## If you smoke, make a plan to quit

Smoking is dangerous to your health. Quitting will reduce your risk of dying from heart disease, blood vessel disease, lung problems, cancer and stroke.

Talk to your doctor about quitting. Ask about classes and support groups in your area. Also ask about medicines and other aids to help you quit.

Get support and encouragement from family and friends. Ask for advice on new ways to relax and deal with stress.

Before you try to stop smoking, commit to stopping. Smoking is a learned behavior that you must unlearn. It is not easy to stop, but it can be done if you are serious about quitting. Stopping will help you live a healthier and longer life. There is also less risk your children will smoke someday.