



# Myths About Smoking During Pregnancy

**Myth 1: I smoked during my last pregnancy and had a healthy baby, so this baby will be healthy too.**

Fact: Every time you smoke during pregnancy you put your baby's health at risk. If you smoked and had a healthy pregnancy in the past, that does not mean your next one will be healthy, too.

**Myth 2: There is nothing wrong with having a small baby.**

Fact: Low birth weight babies are more likely to have serious health problems than normal weight babies. These problems can affect your baby's health as a toddler or an adult. Smoking during pregnancy increases the chances of having a low birth weight baby.

**Myth 3: I am three months pregnant. There is no point in stopping now. The damage is done.**

Fact: There are benefits to quitting smoking at any stage of your pregnancy. If you quit now, your risk having a low birth weight baby will be similar to that of a non-smoker. Quitting now also increases the chances your baby's lungs will work well.

**Myth 4: Smoking relaxes me, and being relaxed is better for me and my babe.**

Fact: You may feel calmer when smoking, but the results inside your body are quite the opposite. Smoking speeds up your blood pressure. Every puff of a cigarette also increases the carbon monoxide in your bloodstream, making less oxygen available to your baby.



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## **Myth 5: Quitting smoking will be too stressful on my baby**

**Fact:** Continuing to smoke during pregnancy harms your baby. Quitting smoking does not put extra stress on your baby. Quitting smoking is one of the best things that you can do for your health and your baby's health during development in the womb and after the it is born. By quitting smoking, you will be protecting your infant from the dangers of secondhand smoke and reducing the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

## **Myth 6: Smoking fewer cigarettes during pregnancy is good enough.**

**Fact:** There is no safe level of smoking. Even a few cigarettes a day means harmful chemicals will reach your baby and damage your health. It is never too late to quit. Quitting at any time during pregnancy is likely to reduce the bad effects of smoking on your baby.

## **Myth 7: If I stop smoking, then I'll gain too much weight.**

**Fact:** Many women are afraid of gaining weight when they quit smoking. If this sounds like you, pregnancy might actually be a good time to quit smoking. Gaining weight is normal and expected as part of a healthy pregnancy. Increasing the number of calories you eat during your pregnancy is both normal and healthy because it helps you get the calories, vitamins, and minerals that you and your baby need. Talk to your doctor to determine how much weight gain is healthy for you and your baby.

## **Myth 8: The only way to quit smoking is cold turkey.**

**Fact:** There are other ways to quit smoking besides cold turkey. Social support, through one-on-one counseling and support groups are great opportunities to quit smoking. Quitting smoking is hard. Even if you have tried to quit smoking before, you can learn what helped, what didn't work and are more likely to be successful now.