

# reasons to stop



You don't need to do it alone. Your midwife or GP can refer you to a local stop smoking service or you can call **Quit Your Way** Scotland on 0800 84 84 84.

## Why stop?

Smoking during pregnancy is harmful to both mum and baby. As well as the risk of pregnancy and labour complications, smoking in pregnancy affects the growth of babies. They may be born too early and weigh less than normal. A baby with low birthweight may pick up infections more easily, can have difficulty breathing during and after birth and may have health and wellbeing problems that last through childhood and beyond.

There is strong evidence that if you or someone in your household smokes it will affect your pregnancy and your baby's health. So there has never been a better time to stop.

If you stop smoking, you will reduce risks to your pregnancy such as miscarriage or stillbirth, and risks to your baby such as sudden unexpected death in infancy (SUDI, sometimes known as cot death), and chronic conditions including asthma.

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a poisonous gas contained in cigarette smoke which affects your body's ability to carry oxygen around your body. It stops your baby getting enough oxygen and affects their growth and development and makes their heart beat harder. CO monitors are used to establish how much carbon monoxide is in your body. This is an important test at the booking-in clinic, just like blood and urine tests. If you are a smoker, or are exposed to high levels of second-hand smoke, your CO level will be high. Your midwife will discuss this with you and refer you for support from the stop smoking services.

## Go smoke-free

The best thing for you and your baby is to stop smoking and to limit your family's exposure to second-hand smoke. The harmful chemicals in second-hand smoke linger in the air. You can't see or smell them, but they are still there. They move easily from room to room, taking about an hour to reduce by 50%, and may linger for up to five hours, even with the window open and door closed.

Second-hand smoke can affect babies still in the womb. If you breathe in second-hand smoke, the chemicals in the smoke make their way to your unborn baby. Babies and children are more likely to be harmed by second-hand smoke as they breathe more rapidly than adults. Smoking regularly near a baby is one of the main known causes of sudden unexpected death in infancy (SUDI, sometimes known as cot death). (Also see page 145.) Other carers should never smoke near your baby. If there are smokers in the house who are unable to give up, ask them to smoke outside.

Making your home and car smoke-free is the only way to protect yourself and others, especially babies and children, from second-hand smoke. It is now illegal to smoke in a car which has a passenger under the age of 18. It aims to protect children from the harmful effects of second-hand smoke.

For more information and tips to help you choose clean air for yourself and your family, visit [www.rightoutside.org](http://www.rightoutside.org)

## Resources to help you and other members of the household to **stop**

**Stopping smoking is good for you and your baby. Stopping before or during early pregnancy is best but it is still good for you and for your baby to stop at any point. Stopping smoking is good for your partner's or other household members' health too.**

*How to stop smoking and stay stopped*

This booklet will help smokers who are ready to stop and give information on how to go about it.



### *IQuit*

This booklet is especially for pregnant women. You'll find out about reasons to quit, the effects of smoking and how to get support when stopping smoking.



E-cigarettes are definitely less harmful than smoking tobacco. However, this does not mean that they are safe in pregnancy. Quitting smoking ASAP is the best approach, and if you're having nicotine cravings, then seek advice on nicotine replacement therapies like lozenges and gum to help you quit.

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For help and information about stop smoking services visit [www.quityourway.scot](http://www.quityourway.scot) or call **0800 84 84 84**.