



# SMOKING



## Taking baby steps for a healthy baby

You have talked about quitting before. It's hard. Smoking is an addiction. It is something you turn to when you are stressed or when you are out socially with your friends. It's a habit. But now it has taken on a new meaning. A baby may be in your future. You can't imagine bringing a young life into a smoky world, but where do you start? Just by thinking about stopping smoking, you have already made a start.

You took the time to worry about the fact that your smoking or your partner's smoking could make a difference in the health of your baby, even before birth. In fact, smoking can make it more difficult for you to get pregnant. Smoking reduces fertility for both men and women. Being in a smoke filled room can have the same effect.

You may have heard that smoking can cause a baby to be born too soon or too small. A smaller baby does not mean an easier delivery. And after birth, a baby born to smoking parents can be harder to take care of. That could mean more crying, colds, ear infections and lung problems. Quitting smoking does not cause stress for your baby, as some may have lead you to believe. It is not easy, but deciding how to quit today is an important beginning to a healthier future. You've just taken your first baby step to quitting by reading this! If you have made a promise to yourself to quit smoking, you will want to know the facts about smoking and the health of your baby and partner.

We can wait until we're pregnant and then quit smoking.

Stopping your habit might be stressful. It could take many tries. You need to do it now – *before* you get pregnant.

My friend smoked when she was pregnant and her baby is fine.

Tobacco takes its toll in ways you can't always see. Some effects may not show at the time of birth and emerge later on in life.

Smoking will keep me from gaining too much weight when I am pregnant.

Pregnancy calls for eating well. Weight gain is a natural and important part of growing a healthy baby. You will lose weight naturally after the birth by healthy eating, being active and breastfeeding.

If I smoke "light" cigarettes, they are less harmful.

People take in as much tar and nicotine from "light" cigarettes as from regular ones.



# SMOKING

## *The burning risks...*

### **Your health, puff by puff!**

Smoking or exposure to second hand smoke during pregnancy is likely to mean:

- ❖ A higher chance of miscarriage
- ❖ A baby born too early or under weight
- ❖ Labour and delivery complications
- ❖ Loss of the baby during birth

### *When you smoke, your baby smokes!*

- ❖ The chemicals in tobacco smoke get into a baby's blood stream cutting oxygen by 25 %, affecting growth and overall health.
- ❖ A small child held by a smoking parent takes in more cancer-causing chemicals per kilogram of body weight than the parent.
- ❖ A baby exposed to second hand smoke is more likely to develop colds, coughs, ear infections, and breathing problems including asthma and illnesses such as pneumonia.
- ❖ A smoker's baby is more likely to need hospital treatment due to illness in their first year of life.
- ❖ A baby exposed to second hand smoke is twice as likely to die of sudden infant death syndrome (crib or cot death).

## *Clear the air — you're almost there!*

The chemicals in tobacco smoke will harm smokers and those exposed to second hand smoke. Smoking is a leading cause of impotence and lowers sperm count in men. Smoking also makes it harder for some women to get pregnant. That's why a decision to clear the air of smoke needs to be a family affair, not just the promise of one parent or another. Knowing the harm that smoking brings to you and your family brings you halfway to kicking the habit. You may have tried to quit before. You may think that you can't. But studies show that the more often you try, the more likely you will finally do it – for good.

### *No more "ifs" "ands" or "butts"*

- ❖ Make your home smoke-free; restrict smoking to outside.
- ❖ Decide to quit and set a quit date. You will be joining millions of people who have succeeded some even after decades of smoking.
- ❖ Quitting has several steps. You have started by just thinking about it. Now keep going.
- ❖ Know your best supports. Keep those people close and ask them for help to stay on track.
- ❖ Don't lose faith if you slip back into smoking. Never give up on yourself or your partner who might be trying to quit.

#### **FOR HELP CLOSE TO HOME CONTACT:**

Health care provider: \_\_\_\_\_

Local public health unit: Call INFOline at 1-800-268-1154 / 416-341-5518

Stop smoking program or group: \_\_\_\_\_

The Lung Association Information Line: 1-800-972-2636

Smokers Help Line: 1-877-513-5333