Being a parent starts right now

protecting your child from the dangers of cigarette smoke
quitting smoking is the best thing you can do for you and your baby

Your baby may seem little more than a bump at the moment, but being a parent starts right now.

Although it’s not easy to stop smoking, it’s the single most important thing you can do to improve your health and your family’s health. And if you are healthy, you will be better equipped to handle all the challenges of parenthood.

for your partner

When you smoke around your partner, she’s exposed to the smoke you exhale. This smoke contains over 4,000 dangerous chemicals, including carbon monoxide, hydrogen cyanide and arsenic. She’s also more likely to suffer a miscarriage and your baby is exposed to a bigger risk of developing birth defects and a low birthweight.

Stopping smoking can be difficult and it makes it even harder for your partner to quit if you’re still smoking. However, if you quit smoking too, you’ll be showing your support and the fact that you’re putting your family’s health first.

There are many things you can do to make quitting a little bit easier for both of you. For example, you can make sure that there are no reminders of smoking (like ashtrays or lighters) around the house. Or why not remind your partner that she can call the NHS Smokefree Pregnancy Smoking Helpline on 0800 169 9 169 for additional support?

for your baby

Smoking isn’t good for your baby. Every time your partner inhales smoke, every toxic chemical passes through her lungs into the bloodstream. That blood flows to her placenta and umbilical cord – right into your baby’s tiny body.

The carbon monoxide in cigarettes reduces the oxygen supply to your baby, forcing its tiny heart to beat harder. But oxygen is essential to your baby’s development. If it does not receive the right amount, there’s a bigger risk of miscarriage, low birthweight, birth defects and problems that could affect your child for much longer – like allergies, asthma, wheezing, attention deficit disorder and even cot death. And the children of smokers are three times more likely to grow up to be smokers themselves.
now’s the perfect time to quit

We know it can be difficult, but there’s lots of free support available, so you can make the right choice for you.

The moment you stop smoking you’ll be protecting the health of your baby and everyone in your growing family. We know it can be difficult, but if you visit www.smokefree.nhs.uk you’ll see the support that’s available, so you can make the right choice for you.

local NHS Stop Smoking Services

You’re up to four times more likely to quit successfully with NHS support. You can also go to free one-to-one or group sessions with trained smoking advisers in your area. They can advise you about dealing with stress, weight-gain and managing your cravings.

the NHS Smokefree Helpline

To speak to a specialist adviser to find out more about the free NHS support available, call the NHS Smokefree Helpline on 0800 169 0 169. Or visit the Smokefree website at www.smokefree.nhs.uk

stop smoking medicines

There’s a range of different treatments you can get on prescription, so it doesn’t have to cost you a fortune to quit. Your stop smoking adviser, GP or pharmacist can advise you.

NHS Smokefree Pregnancy Helpline

If your partner smokes, tell them about this special helpline just for mums-to-be. They can get specialist support designed just for them by calling 0800 169 9 169. Or speak to their midwife, GP or pharmacist about getting specialist support.

the Quit Kit

The Quit Kit is a box of practical tools and advice developed with experts, smokers and ex-smokers, which has helped thousands of smokers quit successfully. Order your Quit Kit today at www.smokefree.nhs.uk
we’re here to help you

If you need to talk to someone about anything in this booklet on your unborn baby’s health, please ask.

You can:

- Talk to your midwife or GP
- Call the NHS Smokefree Helpline on 0800 169 0 169 (Weekdays 9am – 8pm. Weekend 11am – 5pm)
- Or textphone 0800 169 0 171
- Go to www.smokefree.nhs.uk/pregnancy
- To find your local NHS Stop Smoking Service text QUIT plus your postcode to 88088