



Tobacco Facts for Pregnant Women

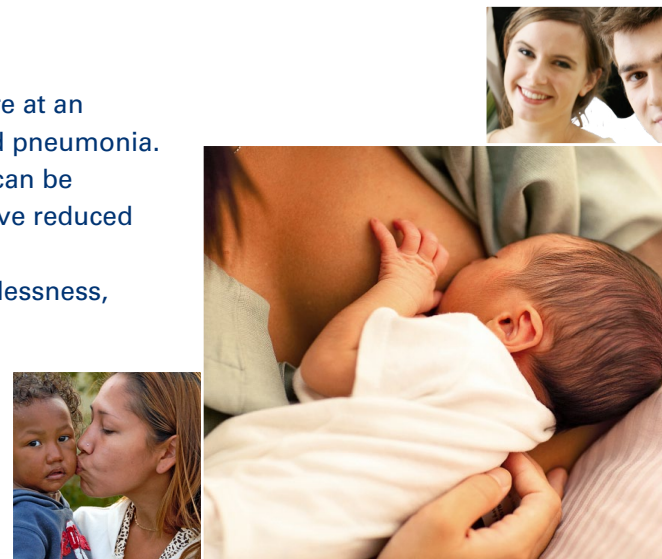
When you are pregnant everything you do and everything around you affects your unborn child. Using cigarettes and/or smokeless tobacco (iqmik, snus, chew, snuff) and being around people who use tobacco exposes your baby to harmful chemicals that may have a lasting negative impact. Iqmik and other smokeless tobacco products are not a natural or healthy alternative to smoking while pregnant. Choosing to quit tobacco at any time during your pregnancy will improve your baby's health as well as your own.

Why it's Important to Quit Tobacco Before or During Pregnancy:

- Using tobacco decreases the amount of oxygen your baby receives through the umbilical cord.
- The risk for miscarriage is increased by using tobacco.
- Babies born to mothers who use tobacco are more likely to be premature and suffer from underdeveloped lungs.
- Tobacco use while pregnant nearly doubles your risk for having a low birthweight baby.
- Babies born to tobacco users are three times more likely to die during sleep from SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome).

Tobacco Use and Breast-feeding:

- Babies exposed to secondhand smoke, or smoke in the home, are at an increased risk for allergies, ear infections, asthma, bronchitis and pneumonia.
- The harmful chemicals found in cigarettes and chewing tobacco can be absorbed through the mother's breast milk, causing a baby to have reduced protection against allergies.
- These chemicals increase the likelihood of a rapid heartbeat, restlessness, vomiting and diarrhea.
- Mothers who use tobacco are likely to have reduced production of breast milk.



“ To all mothers that smoke cigarettes and do drugs or alcohol... please think again of what could happen... because I didn't [quit smoking during my pregnancy] my baby is going through a lot. We are always traveling to go to the hospital, he takes all kinds of medication, and he has trouble breathing. ”

— A first-time mother who responded to Alaska PRAMS*

Tips to Help You Quit

Why Should I Quit?

- Your baby will be healthier!
- 71% of adults in Alaska would like to quit tobacco.
- 93% of Alaska Native adults agree that every cigarette causes a smoker damage.
- The risk for heart disease is cut in half one year after quitting tobacco.
- In five years after quitting tobacco your risk for cancer of the mouth, throat and esophagus are cut in half.
- In ten years after quitting, your risk for developing lung cancer drops by 50%.

How Do I Quit?

- Call Alaska's Tobacco Quit Line! The Quit Line is **FREE** for all Alaskans and is available by calling 1-800-QUIT NOW (1-800-784-8669) seven days a week, from 4 a.m. to 11 p.m. Quit Line services include phone counseling sessions and up to eight weeks of free nicotine replacement therapy, including the patch, gum or lozenge.
- Obtain support from friends and family. Ask Alaska's Tobacco Quit Line to send you the "Ally Guide."
- Contact your clinic to find out what tobacco resources are available in your area.
- Keep trying to quit! Most tobacco users make several quit attempts before staying quit for good.

// Everyone at the program is so kind. You're nonjudgmental and that is what REALLY makes a difference. Last Friday I was ashamed to call because I had failed. The guy I spoke with told me that it took him five tries to quit and knowing that really made me feel better. Thanks so much. **//**

— Alaska's Tobacco Quit Line Caller

*The Alaska Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System surveys mothers of newborns about many different topics, including tobacco use, <http://www.epi.hss.state.ak.us/mcheipi/prams/default.stm>.

