

- ✓ How your smoking affects your children
- ✓ Tips for giving up smoking
- ✓ Where to get more help



How does my **smoking** affect my child's health?

AT A GLANCE



Smoking – when you give up, everyone benefits

- Tobacco smoke contains poisonous gases, tar and chemicals. These can have a very serious affect on your children's health.
- The best thing to do to protect your family from the effects of tobacco smoke is to give up. Ways to help reduce your children's exposure to second-hand smoke while you are smoking include keeping your home and the areas where your children play, eat and sleep completely smoke free.
- It's a really good idea not to smoke in the car.
- If you smoke, there's more chance your children will smoke when they are older.
- You can get help from your GP, practice nurse, health visitor, midwife, pharmacist or local NHS Stop Smoking Service.
- Lots of people who never thought they could give up, have managed it. You can too!

Did you know?

The effects of second-hand smoke on children can be more serious because their bodies are still developing.

Go on – you can do it!

If you're a regular smoker, it's probably a big part of your life. Something you enjoy and look forward to. A reward after a hard day.

That's one reason why smoking is so difficult to give up. Of course, the other is that it's physically addictive. You probably already know that smoking is bad for your health, and if you are like most smokers, you want to give up. But it may also be worth thinking about the impact that second-hand smoke can have on your children's health as this is another great reason to give up.

That's what this booklet is about. It will:

- help you understand how cigarette smoke harms children
- give you tips and ideas on how to stop smoking
- tell you where you can find information and support on giving up.

New information is coming to light all the time, and there are products and approaches that really do work.

When you smoke your child smokes

Tobacco smoke contains poisonous gases, tar and thousands of toxic chemicals. You can't always see them, but they are there. And this poison gets into the body of your child when they inhale your smoke. Children are more sensitive to smoke than we are because their bodies are still developing.

Babies and children who breathe in smoke are:

- twice as likely to have asthma attacks and chest infections
- more likely to need hospital care in their first year of life
- off sick from school more often
- more likely to get coughs, colds and wheezes
- more at risk from cot death
- more at risk from meningitis
- more at risk of getting glue ear which can lead to partial deafness.

Practical tips

The best thing you can do to protect your family from second-hand smoke is to give up smoking altogether.

However, there are also a number of things to do while you're still smoking:

- Always smoke outside your home, well away from children.
- Never smoke where your children play, eat or sleep.
- Ask friends and family to smoke outside; explain that second-hand smoke is bad for your children.
- When out and about with the family, find non-smoking or smoke-free areas.

What about car journeys?

Second-hand smoke gets even more concentrated inside a car. You can reduce children's travel sickness and make a positive difference to their health if you avoid smoking when they travel with you.

Practical tips when travelling

- On short trips, have a cigarette before you set off, so you don't need to smoke in the car.
- On longer trips, stop the car and smoke outside it – away from the children.

Worried your child may start smoking?

Research shows that children who live with smokers are much more likely to start themselves. Smoking is a difficult habit to break, so do your best to encourage your children not to start.

Did you know?

85% of smoke is invisible and doesn't smell. So even if a room doesn't seem smoky, it's still not safe for your child to be in it.

Ways to give up smoking

The best thing you can do to protect your children's health is to give up smoking. Of course that's easier said than done. But it is possible. Here are some of the ways you can do it:

- **'Cold turkey':** many people give up using will power and determination – but it's much easier to give up with extra help.
- **Getting fit:** this can really help you stop smoking.
- **Email motivator:** you can sign up for regular emails that update you on your progress and help you stay strong if you're tempted to give in. Visit www.givingupsmoking.co.uk for more information.
- **Acupuncture:** this involves needles being inserted on to key pressure points of the body. It's not painful. Although there are no clinical tests to prove the effectiveness of acupuncture in helping people give up, some smokers have found it valuable.
- **Hypnotherapy:** this tries to change your dependence on smoking, but again has not been clinically proven.
- **Laser treatment:** a new treatment that uses a painless laser to stimulate energy points on the body. There is no clinical proof for its effectiveness.
- **Nicotine replacement therapy (NRT):** now available on prescription, NRT eases withdrawal symptoms while you get used to not smoking. The dose of NRT is gradually reduced. NRT products are things like patches, gum, nasal spray, micro tabs, lozenges and inhalators. Some people think that NRT is bad for you because it contains nicotine. Although nicotine is the addictive chemical in cigarette smoke, it is the other chemicals that damage your health. NRT will help you overcome your cravings for nicotine without damaging your health in the way smoking does. However, you should check with your GP or pharmacist that NRT is right for you.
- **Zyban:** a new drug available on prescription that suppresses the nicotine buzz when smoking a cigarette. It helps put you off cigarettes. Some users have reported unpleasant side effects and Zyban is not recommended if you are pregnant, breastfeeding, have a history of epilepsy, liver disease or an eating disorder. You should talk to your GP or pharmacist to make sure this product is right for you. Early findings show it to be highly effective, but for maximum effect it should be used as part of an overall give-up smoking plan.

Did you know?

You're up to **four times** more likely to give up smoking if you use your local NHS Stop Smoking Service combined with nicotine gum or patches. Turn to the back page for contact details.

Who else can help?

- **Your GP, practice nurse, health visitor, midwife or pharmacist** can give you advice about stopping smoking. Ask them about nicotine gum and patches on prescription.
- **Local NHS Stop Smoking Services** offer individual and group support. They can also help you get nicotine gum and patches on prescription.

What could you do with the money you save from not buying cigarettes?

Try calculating the amount you would save each week, each month and each year. It really adds up.

They did it, so can you

You're probably thinking you could never give up. But so did Dave, Rachel and Natalie. Read about what happened to them...

Dave

Dave was a parent who smoked up to 40 cigarettes a night. He gave up by seeking one-to-one help from his local NHS Stop Smoking Service, which suggested he try NRT. Giving up has saved him so much money, he's taken his family on holiday.

Rachel

Rachel developed a constant cough and was always thinking about her next cigarette. Weekly group counselling sessions helped her give up the habit and to regain her energy for life and family.

Natalie

Natalie is proof that giving up smoking doesn't mean you put on weight. She has lost two stone since giving up. She has also saved money and her food tastes better.

Want to find out more?

NHS Smoking Helpline

For FREE advice, support and information packs.

 **Helpline 0800 169 0 169**

 **Textphone 0800 169 0 171**

Local NHS Stop Smoking Service

One-to-one or group help or advice on giving up. Find your local service by texting GIVE UP followed by your full postcode to **88088**.

www.givingupsmoking.co.uk

Online help and support, including the chance to email in your questions and 'Ask an Expert'.

Your local GP, practice nurse or pharmacist

Talk about any concerns you have, and find out about products that can reduce cravings and withdrawal symptoms.


NHS Pregnancy Smoking Helpline

Sympathetic help and advice on giving up during pregnancy:

 **Helpline 0800 169 9 169**

NHS Asian Tobacco Helplines

 Urdu **0800 169 0 881**

 Punjabi **0800 169 0 882**

 Hindi **0800 169 0 883**

 Gujarati **0800 169 0 884**

 Bengali **0800 169 0 885**

FREE and confidential advice and tips on giving up smoking, chewing tobacco and tobacco paan. Helplines are open from 1pm – 9pm every Tuesday.

Can't get onto the internet at home?

Visit your local library which will have computers and internet access.

Copies of this publication can be obtained from: DfES Publications, PO Box 5050, Annesley, Nottingham NG15 0DJ.
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