

A man with dark hair, wearing a light blue button-down shirt, is smiling warmly while holding a baby. The baby is wearing a pink outfit. The background is softly blurred, suggesting an outdoor setting.

Important news for fathers who smoke

We all know that it's dangerous for a woman to smoke when she's pregnant.

But it's also dangerous if a pregnant woman who doesn't smoke, has a partner who does.

She will be breathing in tobacco smoke.

This is called secondhand smoke.



Why is secondhand smoke so dangerous for babies?

A pregnant woman provides all the food a baby needs during the pregnancy. Everything she eats, drinks and breathes, including tobacco smoke, affects her and the baby.

The more time a pregnant woman spends with someone who is smoking, the more smoke she inhales. Toxins from the smoke pass through her lungs into her bloodstream and through the umbilical cord to the baby. The baby is not protected from smoke in the mother's womb.

Smoking around a pregnant woman may affect the baby's growth and reduce the baby's birthweight.

After the birth, smoking by the mother or father around the baby can result in ear or chest infections and asthma.

A baby exposed to tobacco smoke by the mother or father has a higher risk of dying from cot death.

What can you do?

If you smoke and your partner is pregnant, you can do something.

First of all, think about quitting – for yourself and your family. Reading this brochure is a good start. When you're ready, there is help available.

If you don't feel ready to quit, you can still help to protect your baby by not smoking inside your home or car, or around your partner. It is also important that after the birth, you do not smoke inside your home or car, or near your baby when outside.





Quitting

What's in it for you?

- Your health will improve and you will have more energy to keep up with your kids.
- You stop or reduce the many damaging effects of smoking that lead to cancer, heart disease, emphysema and other illnesses.
- Smoking kills around 1 in 4 smokers in middle age. For many, this is at a time when their kids are still growing up.
- You will have more money. If you smoke 20 cigarettes a day, you will save around \$7,700 in a year.
- You will set a great example to your kids and reduce the chance they will take up smoking later on.
- Smoking causes problems with getting or maintaining an erection, due to its effects on the blood vessels of the penis. Smoking can also damage sperm. Quitting smoking as soon as possible can help prevent these problems.



What if your partner smokes too?

If your partner smokes and is pregnant you should encourage her to quit. You can have a big influence on her. It's important that she quits smoking for herself and the baby.

If you smoke it will make it harder for her to quit, so you may want to give her some moral support and give up too. If not, try to smoke outside and don't leave your cigarettes where she can easily find them. Give her the best chance to succeed.

For advice or practical help

Quitline 13 7848

The Quitline is a confidential telephone information and advice service. For the cost of a local call (except for mobile phones), Quit Specialists provide encouragement and support to help smokers quit.

Go online: www.quit.org.au

Quit Victoria's website has a range of information that you can read, interact with and download. Find out more about the Quitline, QuitCoach and QuitTxt.

QuitCoach: www.quitcoach.org.au

The QuitCoach is a web-based computer program that asks you questions and helps you quit by giving free personal advice tailored to your needs.

QuitTxt

QuitTxt provides regular SMS messages including tips and encouragement to help you keep on track throughout your quit attempt. To begin, all you need to do is register and complete a brief questionnaire at www.quit.org.au/quittxt.

Quit Victoria is a joint initiative of Cancer Council Victoria, the Department of Health, the National Heart Foundation and the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation.

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