

You quit. Two quit.



A Guide to Help New Mothers Stay Smoke-Free



Having a plan to stay smoke-free is an important step.



## Welcome to motherhood!

You have just been through a life-changing experience – pregnancy and child birth. Congratulations! Now that you are a new parent, it is still very important to take care of yourself and to keep you and your baby healthy. One of the most important ways to do this is to stay smoke-free.

Being a new mother can be very stressful. Interrupted sleep, feeling down, being worried and juggling many things can be very difficult. This can make it hard to stay away from cigarettes. But there are things you can do to get through this time and stay smoke-free.

## Benefits of being smoke-free

You might have quit smoking while you were pregnant. That's great!

Now that you are a new mother, staying smoke-free is one of the best things you can do for yourself, your baby and everyone else in your house. Some women, though, are tempted to start smoking again after their babies are born.

Think about your reasons to stay smoke-free.

### Benefits for you

- Gives you more energy and helps you breathe more easily.
- Saves money that you can spend on other things.
- Makes your clothes, hair and home smell better.
- Increases your choices of birth control methods.
- Helps prevent heart disease, lung disease and cancer.
- Helps prevent colds and serious illnesses like pneumonia.



Staying smoke-free will help you be a healthier mother.



Help your baby breathe better.  
Keep secondhand smoke away.

If you smoked during pregnancy, it is not too late to quit smoking now – there are still many benefits for you and your baby's health.

## Benefits for your baby

Keeping your baby away from smoke:

- Lowers your baby's risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).
- Reduces the number of sinus and ear infections.
- Reduces the chance your baby will have asthma.
- Results in fewer colds, coughing and congestion.
- Lowers chances of bronchitis, pneumonia and croup.
- Promotes healthier lungs for a lifetime.
- Promotes healthier brain development.

## Family and friends smoking around you and the baby

Being around others while they are smoking can make it very tempting to smoke. It can be especially hard if you live with someone who smokes. It makes it harder when you see and smell cigarettes and know they are within reach.

Here are some ways that you can handle this situation:

- Ask the friend or family member to quit with you.
- Ask others not to smoke around you or your baby.
- Make your room, home and car non-smoking areas.
- Leave the room when others smoke.
- Plan other things you can do when someone else is smoking. Keep your hands and mouth busy. You can chew gum or suck on a sugar-free mint.

Babies and children should be kept away from secondhand smoke. This includes cars where people are smoking. It is also important to make sure that people who have been smoking wash their hands and change their clothes before they hold the baby.



Make it easier to stay smoke-free.  
Ask others not to smoke around you or your baby.



Remember that your rest is important too!

## Feeling tired?

New mothers are often very tired. It is hard to feed and care for a baby around the clock every day. You may be tempted to smoke a cigarette to get a boost of energy. It may be especially hard to resist a cigarette during your baby's early morning or late afternoon feedings. Instead of smoking, have a healthy snack like fresh fruit or peanut butter and crackers. Have a glass of water or juice. Giving your body healthy food will help keep your energy level up.

Getting enough sleep with a baby in the house is easier said than done.

Here are some tips for getting more sleep:

- Sleep when the baby sleeps.
- Trade babysitting services with a family member or friend, so you can make time for a nap.
- Stay away from cigarettes as well as alcoholic and caffeinated beverages. These things will make it harder for you to rest well.

## Juggling work, family, school and home

Are you juggling work or school after your baby is born? Do you have other children to take care of? Ask family and friends for help to take some of the stress off you. If others ask what they can do, give them a specific job. They can do laundry, make a meal, take older kids to the park or watch the baby for a little while.

Make time to relax.

Be sure to spend some time each week doing something you enjoy:

- See friends.
- Read a book or magazine.
- Take time for a walk.
- Spend time alone in prayer or meditation.
- Escape to the bathtub with some soothing music.

A relaxed mom is good for everyone.



You don't have to be a superwoman.  
Ask for help.



Feeling down or sad after having a baby is very common. Talk to your health care provider. You don't need to suffer in silence.

## Feeling down?

Mothers often have a lot of different feelings and emotions in the weeks and months after they give birth. Many mothers will experience the “baby blues.” They may feel sad and cry easily for a little while after they have their babies. Other mothers experience much stronger feelings that don't seem to go away. These moms may have postpartum depression. One out of every 10 mothers may have this kind of depression after the baby arrives. Not everyone talks about depression, but it is actually very common among new mothers.

Smoking cigarettes is one way that some women cope with the many feelings they have after their babies are born. Smoking may make them feel better for a short period of time. But it can't take away the depression, and it can't help them get better.

Experts say that new mothers should rest as often as they can, avoid things like sugar and alcohol, eat healthy food and get out of the house at least once a day. If this doesn't work for you, call your health care provider and let him or her know how you feel.



If you have one or more of the symptoms listed on this page, call your health care provider as soon as you can. There are many ways that he or she can help you. They may suggest things like talking, group support and medication, if needed.

## Ask for help if you are:

- Feeling very tired almost all the time.
- Feeling really worried.
- Crying all the time.
- Having thoughts about hurting yourself or your baby.
- Not able to sleep – even when the baby is sleeping.
- Not happy or able to enjoy simple things.



Your health care provider can help you cope with the symptoms of depression. Don't be afraid to call.



Many moms want to lose weight after they have babies. There are ways to do this that can build healthy lifestyles for you and your baby.

## Trying to lose weight?

Losing weight after having a baby is a common goal among new mothers. Some women think that smoking can help them lose weight. If you smoke instead of eating or drinking, this harmful habit can hurt your body. There are better ways to lose weight and keep it off.

## Good food now - weight loss soon enough

Your body needs energy to recover from delivery and to care for a new baby. Give yourself a break. Be realistic and wait two to three months before focusing on weight loss. Chances are you will be more successful in the long run.

## Refuel your body

Get organized and stock your kitchen with healthy food that is simple to prepare. Fruits and vegetables are healthy snacks; make them easy to get to and keep plenty on hand. Enjoy small meals throughout the day. Ready-to-eat whole grain cereal, nuts, eggs, cheese, peanut butter and whole grain crackers are also good foods to stock.

## Put it on paper

People who write down what they eat each day are more likely to succeed at losing weight. By tracking your meals, you'll see what kind and how much food you are eating over the day.

## Get moving

You may have to start off slowly, but physical activity will burn calories, reduce stress and may help prevent depression. The best advice is to take your baby for a walk and make it part of your daily routine. If you have never exercised before or if you have questions, call your health care provider.



Exercise a little bit every day. Take your baby for a stroll. Breathe deeply!



If you started to smoke again after you had your baby, don't give up. You can still stop smoking. You've quit once, and you can definitely do it again!

## Still smoking? It is NEVER too late to quit!

Whether you cut back while you were pregnant and are now ready to quit for good, or if you are just now deciding to take the plunge, it isn't too late to stop smoking.

As you get ready to stop smoking, make a list of your reasons for quitting. Think about when you smoke and why. Then, find three daily habits you can change to reduce your chances of smoking. Think of ways to keep your hands and mouth busy by doing things such as chewing gum, sipping water, playing with a rubber band or doodling with a pencil.

Now that you are no longer pregnant, you may be able to use medications that can improve your chances of being able to quit. These include the nicotine patch, gum and lozenges. Talk to your doctor or nurse before beginning any new medications, even over-the-counter ones, especially if you are breastfeeding.

If you are breastfeeding and are considering using a medicine to help you stop smoking, please talk with your doctor or nurse before you start taking the medicine.

## Make your action plan

Think about when and where you might be tempted to smoke.

List the places:

1 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_

What can you do to keep from smoking?

List things you can do:

1 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_



Being prepared will help you be more successful in staying smoke-free.



Help stay smoke-free by getting support from family, friends, your health care provider and quit-smoking counselors.

## Resources

- (1-877-YES-QUIT/1-877-937-7848 [www.yesquit.org](http://www.yesquit.org))
- Your doctor or health care provider
- Your county health department
- Maternal and Child Health: <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/mch/default.shtm>

## Web sites for more information on staying smoke-free:

- [www.takingtexasobaccofree.com](http://www.takingtexasobaccofree.com)
- [www.women.smokefree.gov/pregnancy-motherhood](http://www.women.smokefree.gov/pregnancy-motherhood)
- [www.becomeanex.org](http://www.becomeanex.org)

# Free quit coaching from the Texas Quitline

## 1-877-YES-QUIT (1-877-937-7848)

- Want to double your chances of quitting for good? You can call the Texas Quitline toll-free number for help. You can talk with a trained Quit Coach who can help you quit smoking and stay smoke-free.
- The Texas Quitline is free, confidential and available from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 a.m., seven days a week.



Double your chances – pick up the phone! 1-877-YES-QUIT.



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