



#QuitforCovid

# **The risks of smoking in pregnancy and COVID-19**



Smokefree  
Sheffield

[www.smokefreesheffield.org](http://www.smokefreesheffield.org)

# There's never been a more important time to look after your lung health.

Pregnant women are at risk of serious illness from coronavirus. Pregnancy can change how your body handles viral infections, like COVID-19, and in some cases, these infections can be worse in pregnant women.

Smoking increases the risk even further. Emerging evidence suggests smokers who catch COVID-19 are more likely to get severe disease and need intensive care than non-smokers.



## Protecting yourself and your baby

**One of the most important steps you can take to protect yourself from COVID-19 and shield your baby from the serious risks of smoking is to quit.**

If you smoke during pregnancy, you are at a greater risk of:

- catching lung infections like COVID-19
- the infection lasting longer, as smoking harms your immune system, making it harder for your body to fight it off
- the infection being more serious than it would be for someone who does not smoke

Creating a smokefree home is another important step to take. Being around secondhand smoke exposes the mother and baby to over 4,000 dangerous chemicals in cigarette smoke.

It is also really important that you follow government guidelines on social distancing and regular hand-washing, details of which can be found at [www.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk).

**By smoking, or being around smokers during pregnancy, your baby is at higher risk of:**

Miscarriage  
Stillbirth  
Premature birth  
Low birth weight  
Lung and breathing problems for the baby  
Baby born with heart defects  
Sudden infant death syndrome

**You and your baby will see the benefits of quitting during and after pregnancy:**

Healthier placenta to feed and protect baby  
Baby's organs develop better  
Baby born at the right time  
Baby grows stronger  
More oxygen to the baby  
Healthier pregnancy

# Together we can support you and your family to a smokefree pregnancy.

You're three times more likely to quit successfully with the right support, so contact a Specialist Smoking Cessation Midwife today on:

**0114 2265627**

**[sth.stopsmokingmidwiferyteam@nhs.net](mailto:sth.stopsmokingmidwiferyteam@nhs.net)**

We can find the quit method that works for you, whether that's nicotine replacement therapy (NRT), or choosing to switch to e-cigarettes.

