

What is the link between smoking and mental health?

It's important to understand the risks associated with smoking during the perinatal period.

Many people believe that smoking can offer relief from feelings of stress or low mood, but in fact the opposite is true. Smoking can trap people in a dependency cycle and can increase anxiety, stress, low mood and depression in the long-term.

Smoking during both the pre- and post-natal periods can impact the health of a child. It can lead to low birth weight and pre-term birth, as well as increasing the risk of respiratory conditions, such as asthma, in young children.

These outcomes can cause a great deal of stress for the mother and strain the mother-child bond, worsening her mental health during and after birth.

Second-hand smoke has a similar impact on the overall health of the mother and baby as smoking, so creating a smokefree household is incredibly important.

Free support is available from Smokefree Sheffield and the maternity service at The Jessop Wing for mothers, birthing people, their partners and other family members who smoke.



To find out more about the free support available visit:

smokefreesheffield.org



Smoking & Perinatal Mental Health:

A Professional's Guide



The mental health benefits.



Stopping smoking during pregnancy can substantially reduce the risk of perinatal depression.



Stopping smoking can improve perinatal mental health.



Stopping smoking can improve the overall wellbeing of women in the perinatal period. This can improve the relationship she has with herself and her baby.



Women experiencing poor perinatal mental health are just as likely as anyone else to quit smoking for good.

The financial benefits:

Inform women that by stopping smoking, they could save around £2,500 per year, depending on how much they smoke.

Advise them that it is cheaper to switch to using patches, lozenges or a vape, especially if they use the free support available. For example, Smokefree Sheffield will provide 12 weeks of free stop-smoking support and tools, including NRT and vapes.

Having supportive conversations with women about stopping smoking during the perinatal period is essential.

Sometimes it can feel difficult to start the conversation about stopping smoking with women during such a critical moment in their lives. For some women, the perinatal period can feel overwhelming.

Knowing the facts about the risks and impacts can help you feel confident in starting and continuing the conversation about smoking.

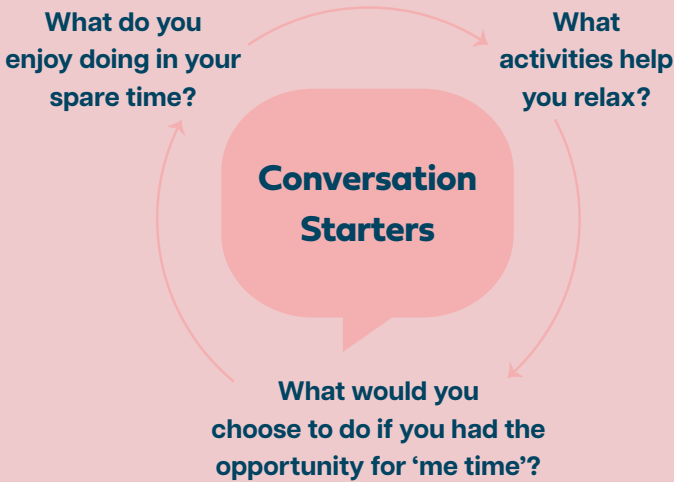
The topic should be addressed frequently in your discussions, but if this is not received positively by the woman, you could make a judgment that now is not the right time, and try again next time.



Tips for building a trusting relationship over time.

If someone isn't ready to have the conversation about stopping smoking, you may want to build more trust first. You could start by finding out more about their interests or hobbies.

Ultimately, this may help them come up with ways to avoid smoking when they are feeling low or stressed. The purpose of having this conversation is to encourage them to think of alternative activities and coping strategies that may be more beneficial to their wellbeing.



Some prompts: going for a short walk, reading a few pages of a book, spending 10 minutes sitting outdoors, having a relaxing bath or listening to music.