Myths and Facts about Smoking in Pregnancy

MYTH: It’s too stressful to quit smoking when I’m pregnant.
FACT: Most people have stress in their lives. This may always make it inconvenient to quit smoking. It helps to develop a coping strategies plan, so that you can cope with stress without smoking.

MYTH: Smaller babies are easier to deliver.
FACT: Not necessarily. Pain during delivery is usually caused by contractions. These can happen regardless of the size of the baby. Smaller babies are also more likely to have health complications and may have to stay in hospital longer.

MYTH: It’s too late to quit smoking. It won’t do any good.
FACT: It’s never too late to quit. Ideally, you should quit smoking before becoming pregnant. But you can benefit from quitting at any time during your pregnancy and even post-partum, too.

MYTH: “My other babies were okay” or “I can’t see how it can hurt”.
FACT: Most people have “proof” that other women smoked and had healthy babies. Smoking during pregnancy means there is an increased risk of developing problems. But babies may be born healthy. The question is how much of a risk are you willing to take?

MYTH: “I’ll gain too much weight if I quit smoking.”
FACT: Some people do gain weight when they quit smoking. However, you can minimize weight gain with a healthy diet and exercise. Make sure your quit smoking plan includes healthy eating and exercise. This helps you to avoid turning to food to fill the void of the cigarette.

MYTH: “My doctor said not to quit cold turkey because it is dangerous to my baby”.
FACT: Not true. It is more harmful to your baby if you continue to smoke.

MYTH: “If I cut down the number of cigarettes I smoke per day, I won’t do as much harm to myself or my baby”
FACT: Cutting down can be used as a way to help you get started in your quit plan. However, this does not help to protect you or your baby from the harm caused by smoking. Many smokers make up for smoking fewer cigarettes by inhaling deeper and longer. So you get just as much nicotine and tar from the cigarettes you do smoke. Also, if you continue to smoke, it means you are more likely to go back to smoking your usual number of cigarettes.

MYTH: “If I smoke “light” cigarettes that are low in nicotine and tar, then I don’t do as much damage to myself and the baby”
FACT: Light and mild cigarettes do not reduce harm. Smokers often cover the holes in light cigarettes with either their lips or fingers. This means you get the same amount of tar and nicotine as you do from regular cigarettes.

MYTH: “It will be easier to quit smoking after the baby is born”
FACT: When the baby is born, you will be adjusting to your new life and routine. That can be stressful and you may not want to focus on quitting smoking and going through withdrawal. If you can quit smoking before the baby is born, you will have developed coping skills and will be better able to cope with the arrival of your newborn.