

No 8. Asthma and Pregnancy

- In pregnancy about one third of women find their asthma gets better, one third find it stays the same and one third find it gets worse. If your asthma symptoms get worse you may need an increase in your medication. Your asthma symptoms may change again following delivery.
- Asthma medications in usual doses are perfectly safe in pregnancy but a severe asthma attack may be dangerous to both you and your baby. Poorly controlled asthma can also harm the baby. **Do not stop taking your asthma medication just because you are pregnant – it is important you keep taking this medication as usual.**
- If you suffer from asthma and smoke it is very important that you try to stop smoking while you are pregnant. This is because women who smoke during pregnancy:-
 - are more likely to have a miscarriage
 - are more likely to have a premature labour
 - are more likely to have small babies
 - are more likely to have babies who have breathing problems including asthma.

Ask you doctor, nurse or midwife for advice and help to stop smoking.

- If anybody else in your home smokes encourage them to stop smoking in the house while you are pregnant.
- Some studies show that breast-feeding your baby reduces the chance of your baby developing asthma and other allergic conditions such as eczema. Your asthma medication will not affect your ability to breast-feed and will not affect your baby in any way.
- If you or your partner suffers from asthma your child has a slightly increased chance of having asthma. This chance can be reduced both by breast-feeding and perhaps also by reducing exposure to triggers such as house dust mite and animals during pregnancy and the first year of life.

We are happy to consider requests for this publication in other languages or formats such as large print.

Please call **01324 590886** (24hrs), or email
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