



WOMEN'S HEALTH

National Partnership Offers Supportive Tips to Help Pregnant Smokers Quit

(NAPSA)—Whether you are thinking of quitting smoking or want to help someone else, it's important to know the facts, and how to get help.

Fortunately, The National Partnership to Help Pregnant Smokers Quit, a group of organizations committed to working together to reduce the number of pregnant women who smoke, is focusing on ways to provide pregnant smokers, their families and friends with the supportive tools they need to succeed.

The National Partnership has produced a booklet—"Need Help Putting Out that Cigarette?"—that offers answers to questions such as these.

Q. If I cut down on the number of cigarettes I smoke per day, will it reduce the risk of developing problems during pregnancy?

A. Many pregnant women are tempted to cut down the number of cigarettes they smoke instead of quitting. Cutting down to less than five cigarettes a day can reduce the risk of problems during pregnancy, but quitting is the best thing to do.

Q. How can I deal with cravings and withdrawal while quitting smoking during pregnancy?

A. To help reduce cravings for a cigarette, keep your hands, mouth, and mind busy by knitting, sewing or working on a project. Chew on gum, straws or toothpicks, or munch on healthy treats like fruit or popcorn. Withdrawal symptoms like cough, dizziness or restlessness are normal and are signs that the body is healing. Treat yourself to walks and naps, and avoid caffeine as your body adjusts.

Q. I am pregnant and trying to quit smoking, but members of my family smoke and it's making it harder to quit. How can they help me succeed?

A. Ask friends and family members to help by not smoking



A group of organizations is working together to reduce the number of pregnant women who smoke.

around you or in the house; if this won't work, make certain rooms in the house, including the baby's room, smoke free.

Q. My sister is at the beginning of her pregnancy and has decided to quit smoking. Where can she get help? And how can I support her?

A. Congratulate her on her decision—quitting smoking is the best thing she can do to improve her health as well as her baby's. Tell her to talk with her prenatal care team, who may be able to provide counseling proven to double or triple quit rates.

For you, the best way to help your pregnant sister when she is trying to quit is to be supportive. Visit the Smoke-Free Families Web site, www.smokefreefamilies.org, for tips on how to help your sister through this exciting but difficult time.

More help is available through the Great Start Quitline, 1-866-66-START. The toll-free Quitline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and is managed by the American Cancer Society. For more information on prenatal services in your community, call 1-800-311-BABY or your State or local Health Department. For more information in Spanish, call 1-800-504-7081. This hotline is sponsored by HRSA's Maternal and Child Health Bureau.

Editor's Note: While November 21 is the Great American Smoke Out, the story is useful any time.