

Tobacco Fact sheet

- Smoking is increasing in women worldwide –they are expecting about 40,000 new female smokers per day by 2025. In 2025 they expect about 10 million deaths per year due to smoking. (There were about 10 million deaths due to smoking in the entire 20th century!)
- “Light” cigarettes have holes in the filter that are supposed to decrease the amount of smoke inhaled. However, many smokers are not aware of them and block these holes with their fingers, lips, lipstick or saliva thereby making them no different than regular cigarettes.
- It takes only 7-11 seconds for nicotine to reach the receptors in the brain that trigger increased pleasure, arousal, moderate moods, and improved memory and appetite suppression.
- Tobacco smoke may cause sustained reduction of fetal oxygenation.
- Nicotine levels in the fetus are generally 15% higher than maternal levels.
- The long-term effects on the fetus are different if the mothers smoke earlier or later in the pregnancy due to fetal development patterns.
- There is no literature to prove that stress in pregnancy is detrimental to the fetus, so quitting and the stress it causes is not a valid reason to continue smoking during pregnancy!
- It takes a baby 5 days to withdraw from nicotine at birth.

Fetal tobacco syndrome increases the risk of:

- pre-term delivery
- low birth weight: (200-250 g. lighter; 1.4 cm shorter)
- spontaneous abortion
- placental complications
- sudden infant death syndrome
- respiratory diseases (e.g. asthma, wheezing)

New research in the last five years indicates that fetal tobacco syndrome manifests differently in boys than in girls.

Boys have increased risk for developing conduct disorder (CD)

4 times the risk for early onset of CD in preadolescent boys

2 times the rate of CD symptoms in 16-18 year old boys

1-2 times the risk for violent and persistent crimes in male adults

2-3 times the risk for ADHD in boys

Girls have: 5 times the risk for tobacco use in adolescence.

5 times the risk for drug abuse in 13-17 year old girls.

Information taken from Dr. Paul Gendreau's presentation, March 2005, Montreal