

Welcome

Your Participation will Change Lives

Winter 2008

Dear Colleague,

Welcome to the 2008 Guide for Counseling Women Who Smoke. This revised Guide includes updated facts, information, and resources. It continues to support the 5A's best practice model, which has been proven to be the most effective approach to counseling women. This Guide will serve as a resource to help you learn how to provide smoking cessation counseling and for you to reference as you continue to counsel women who smoke.

Quitting smoking not only reduces the risks of health problems for the baby and complications during delivery, but also benefits a woman's long-term health. Smoking is associated with many health risks for women, including cardiovascular disease, lung cancer, respiratory disease, menstrual disorders, hip fractures and fertility problems.

Smoking during pregnancy has been shown to cause many adverse birth outcomes including low birth weight, premature births, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), placental abruption, spontaneous abortions and decreased fetal growth. Secondhand smoke exposure is also associated with many of these adverse birth outcomes. Smoking during pregnancy accounts for up to 30% of infants born at less than 2,500 grams (5 ½ pounds). In North Carolina, during 2005, nearly twice as many women who smoked delivered a low-weight baby, compared to non-smokers.

Pregnancy is a prime "teachable moment" in health care. Women are more likely to quit smoking during pregnancy than at any other time in their lives. You can use this opportunity to provide the necessary support to help them become smoke-free. While the greatest benefits can be realized when the expectant mother quits smoking early in pregnancy, quitting at any point during pregnancy can yield benefits.

By helping women to stop smoking, you have the opportunity to significantly impact the health of women, infants and children for generations to come.

Sincerely,
Women and Tobacco Coalition for Health (WATCH)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many Thanks to...

Guide Revision Committee

The following individuals volunteered their time and expertise in the revision of the Guide either through input or review. Thank you for your invaluable contributions.

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NC Division of Public Health
Women’s Health Branch
NC Division of Public Health
Tobacco Prevention and Control Branch
NC Perinatal Outreach Coordinators
(POETs)

INTRODUCTION

The Guide for Counseling Women Who Smoke has been revised to include the best practice model – the 5A's. The 5A's model has been proven to be the most effective approach to counsel women, including pregnant women, who smoke. The 5 A's model is recommended in clinical practice and is designed to be brief, taking 3 minutes or less with non-pregnant smokers and 5 to 15 minutes with pregnant smokers.

The Guide also contains useful information that can help you counsel all women who smoke, including pregnant women, women thinking about pregnancy, new mothers, and teenagers. **Section One** provides background information on the effects of tobacco, addresses your concerns and provides a list of key points for you to consider before you begin to counsel women who smoke. **Section Two** provides specific information to help you counsel pregnant smokers. Information on the step-by-step, 5A's method of counseling is included in this section. **Sections Three and Four**, respectively, address secondhand smoke and smokeless tobacco and suggestions on how to counsel women to eliminate their exposure to secondhand smoke. **Section Five** addresses counseling tips for each stage of a woman's lifespan. This section includes facts on pregnancy and smoking, points to ponder before you begin counseling, and "teachable moments" you can utilize to discuss the issue of smoking during pregnancy and the postpartum period. **Section Six** addresses the cultural aspects of counseling. **Section Seven** addresses providing support through pharmacotherapy as well as provide tips for dealing with withdrawal symptoms. Finally, **Section Eight** provides websites, handouts, and office-based system information.

Please view the companion video, *Counseling From the Heart: Helping Women Eliminate Tobacco Use and Exposure*. The video demonstrates simple techniques to aid in your counseling. Like the Guide, the video is available free of charge. To obtain a copy, contact the NC Division of Public Health, Women's Health Branch at 919-707-5700.

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Behavior change is rarely a discrete, single event. It is a process.

Who Should Use This Guide?

All healthcare providers and community leaders who work with women in their childbearing years:

- Physicians
- Nurses
- Nurse Midwives
- Nurse Practitioners
- Physician Assistants
- Health Educators
- Maternity Care Coordinators
- Social Workers
- Outreach Workers
- Counselors
- Nutritionists
- Childbirth Educators
- Dentists
- Dental Hygienists
- Pharmacists
- Respiratory Therapists
- Wellness Coordinators
- Church & Community Leaders

Quitting is a process. It takes time and patience.