



Wyoming  
Department  
of Health

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**Wyoming Healthy Together Program**  
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## Discharge Instructions: Protect Your Newborn from Cigarette Smoke

You've likely heard about the dangers of secondhand smoke. But did you know that cigarette smoke is even worse for babies than it is for adults? Now that you've brought your newborn home, it's crucial to keep cigarette smoke away from the baby. You may have already quit smoking when you found out you were going to have a baby. If not, it's still not too late. And if anyone else in your household smokes, now is the time for them to quit. If you or someone else in the household keeps smoking, at the very least you can make changes to protect the baby. This goes for anyone who spends time near the baby, including grandparents, friends, and babysitters.

### How Cigarette Smoke Can Harm Your Baby

Research shows that smoking around newborns can cause severe health problems. These include:

- Asthma or other lifelong breathing problems
- Worsening of colds or other respiratory problems
- Poor growth and development, both mentally and physically
- Higher chance of SIDS (sudden infant death syndrome)

### Protecting Your Baby from Smoke

If someone in your household smokes and isn't ready to quit, you can still protect your baby. Ban smoking inside the house. Any smoker (including you, if you smoke) should smoke only outside, away from windows and doors. Wear a jacket or sweatshirt while smoking that you take off before holding the baby. Never let anyone smoke around the baby. And never take the baby into an area where people are smoking. If you have visitors who smoke, you may want to explain your smoking rules before they come over, so they know what to expect.

### Quitting Is BEST for Your Baby

If you smoke, quitting is the best thing you can do for your baby. Quitting is hard, but you can do it! Here are some tips:

- Tape a picture of your newborn to your pack of cigarettes. Look at it each time you smoke. This will remind you of the best reason to quit.
- Join a support group or smoking cessation class. This will give you the support and skills you need to quit smoking. You may even meet other parents in the same situation. If you need help finding a group or class, your healthcare provider can suggest one in your area.
- Ask other smokers in the family to quit with you. This way you can support each other.
- If you don't succeed the first time, try again! Many people have to try more than once before they quit for good. Just remember, you're doing it for your baby. Trying to quit is better for your baby than if you'd never tried at all.



**Ask smokers not to smoke near your baby. Be firm. Your baby's health is at stake.**