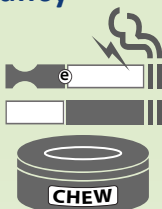


## Alaska Tobacco Facts: Health care providers help promote tobacco-free pregnancies



### Tobacco product use during pregnancy

Cigarettes are the most used tobacco product during pregnancy.<sup>1</sup> However, all products containing nicotine can cause harm during pregnancy.<sup>1</sup> This includes cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, e-cigarettes, nicotine pouches, and Iqmik.



Iqmik, also known as blackbull, is a form of smokeless tobacco. Iqmik is most common in western Alaska. Iqmik contains high levels of nicotine. Iqmik, like other forms of smokeless tobacco, can lead to complications in pregnancy and birth.<sup>2</sup>

### Pregnancy is a strong motivator for quitting tobacco and nicotine products.<sup>1</sup>

In Alaska, over half of women who smoked quit during pregnancy.<sup>3</sup>



Health care providers also support people to quit. Most Alaskans who smoke agreed that advice from a provider helped encourage them to quit.<sup>3</sup>

### Providers can promote tobacco-free pregnancies by a quick screening and counseling:<sup>4</sup>

- **Ask** every patient about tobacco and nicotine use at every visit
- **Advise** all users to quit for good
- **Connect** those ready to quit with resources

## There are benefits to quitting tobacco at any point during pregnancy.<sup>1,5</sup>

### Providers can help

Providers can counsel patients on why quitting tobacco is important during preconception and pregnancy. There are important benefits to quitting tobacco and nicotine at any point during pregnancy.<sup>1,5</sup> **That's because using tobacco and nicotine while pregnant:**

- Increases chances for ectopic pregnancy<sup>6</sup>
- Increases chances for birth defects, miscarriage, and stillbirth<sup>7</sup>
- Makes it more likely babies are born preterm and at low birth weight<sup>7</sup>

### Using tobacco and nicotine during pregnancy has risks that continue after birth too:

- Increases chances for sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)<sup>7</sup>
- Decreases child's growth and development over time<sup>8</sup>
- Reduces safety and supply of breastfeeding milk<sup>9</sup>

### Give babies their best start to life



Quitting smoking during and after pregnancy can help ensure babies have the best possible start in life. Providers can also support patients to stay quit after pregnancy. This support improves the health of mothers and helps children grow up in smokefree homes.

However, quitting tobacco can be hard and take many tries for some people. During slips or relapses, continue to remind patients of the importance of not smoking around their children.



## Share Alaska's Tobacco Quit Line with patients

Alaska's Tobacco Quit Line offers a tailored program for your patients throughout their pregnancy journey from preconception to postpartum, including breastfeeding.

## Alaska's Tobacco Quit Line provides:

- Individualized quit support
- Coaches who receive specialized training
- Additional coaching calls
- Relapse prevention support

## Refer patients electronically:

With the electronic referral program, providers can refer their patients directly to the Quit Line at <https://rallycoaching.my.site.com/referral/s/>.

## There are many other ways to enroll:

Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669)

Text READY to 34191

Visit [AlaskaQuitLine.com](https://AlaskaQuitLine.com)

## Order FREE Quit Line print materials

to share with patients, including posters, tearaway cards, and brochures. All are available at **no cost to you**. Email [doh.tobacco.info@alaska.gov](mailto:doh.tobacco.info@alaska.gov) to place an order.



## More resources for providers

- **Tobacco and Nicotine Cessation During Pregnancy** — A committee opinion created by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists' (ACOG) Committee on Obstetric Practice about tobacco and nicotine cessation during pregnancy can be found at <https://www.acog.org/clinical/clinical-guidance/committee-opinion/articles/2020/05/tobacco-and-nicotine-cessation-during-pregnancy>.
- **Alaska Medicaid Tobacco Treatment Coverage Health Care Provider's Guide** — A fact sheet that outlines counseling and reimbursement for tobacco cessation counseling can be found at [http://web.archive.org/web/20240409100009/https://health.alaska.gov/dph/Chronic/Documents/Tobacco/TobaccoFreeAlaska/quitline/TPC\\_ProviderCessationGuide.pdf](http://web.archive.org/web/20240409100009/https://health.alaska.gov/dph/Chronic/Documents/Tobacco/TobaccoFreeAlaska/quitline/TPC_ProviderCessationGuide.pdf).
- **Alaska Medicaid Tobacco Treatment Coverage Pharmacist's Guide** — A fact sheet that outlines counseling and reimbursement for tobacco cessation counseling can be found at [http://web.archive.org/web/20240409103353/https://health.alaska.gov/dph/Chronic/Documents/Tobacco/TobaccoFreeAlaska/quitline/TPC\\_PharmacistFlyer.pdf](http://web.archive.org/web/20240409103353/https://health.alaska.gov/dph/Chronic/Documents/Tobacco/TobaccoFreeAlaska/quitline/TPC_PharmacistFlyer.pdf).

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