

## Mothers of newborn babies

King Edward Memorial Hospital has a rooming in policy, where mothers and babies stay together 24 hours a day.

For safety and security reasons your baby should not be left in the ward nursery or taken from your ward except for medical care.

Within normal visiting hours you may be able to arrange for a family member to stay with your baby in your room while you leave the ward for a cigarette. Inform the midwife on the ward the name of the person looking after your baby.

## Maternal health

If you are pregnant, quitting smoking will increase your baby's oxygen supply and improve your chances of having a healthy baby.

If you are breastfeeding, nicotine is passed on through your breast milk to your baby. Smoking can cause a decrease in your milk supply

## More information

Quitline: 13 78 48  
www.quitwa.com  
www.quitnow.info.au

The Cancer Council Fresh Start Course:  
13 11 20

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Delivering a Healthy WA

# Hospital Admission and Tobacco Smoking



## WNHS is a smoke-free organisation

Smoking is the largest preventable cause of illness and death in Australia.

The Women and Newborn Health Service (WNHS) is committed to improving and promoting health. Therefore staff, patients and visitors are not permitted to smoke:

- Within any of the WNHS buildings, hospital vehicles or grounds.
- Within five metres of WNHS entrances.
- Within ten metres of an air-conditioning intake.

Smoking in any of these areas may incur a \$50 fine.

Smoking inside WNHS buildings will set off fire alarms.

## I smoke tobacco and I am going to be admitted to hospital

The nicotine found in tobacco is a very addictive drug. Depending on your level of addiction you may be able to tolerate not smoking for a few days while in hospital. However many smokers will experience uncomfortable withdrawal symptoms such as cravings, irritability, headaches, anxiety, constipation and coughing.

You need to have a plan to manage your smoking while you are in hospital.

Your options may be to:

- Use your admission to hospital as an opportunity to quit smoking for good. It is a place where you can receive support and advice.

- Abstain from smoking while in hospital.
- Consider the use of Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT). **You must discuss this option with your doctor to make sure NRT is suitable for you.**

At times you may be unable to leave the ward for a cigarette if you are:

- confined to bed for medical reasons, or
- too unwell to go outside.

Staff are not allowed to assist patients to leave WA Health premises to smoke.

## Understanding your nicotine addiction

Nicotine addiction has three main elements:

1. Physical - people who are physically addicted to cigarettes smoke in response to cravings. Quitting is a matter of addressing your addiction and considering the need for each cigarette. After 12 hours almost all of the nicotine is out of your system.
2. Habit - cigarettes are associated with different activities during the day (eg. smoking after a meal, smoking while talking on the phone). Think about your cigarette habits and ways to break the connection between activities and smoking while in hospital.
3. Emotions - people form psychological dependence on cigarettes depending on how they feel (eg. anger, frustration, boredom). Be aware of why you smoke and break the link between feelings and smoking.

Many smokers find the 4Ds helpful - delay, drink water, deep breath, do something else.

## Will it be too stressful to quit while I'm in hospital?

Many smokers think that having a cigarette is a form of stress relief. However smoking increases your heart rate and blood pressure and does not allow your body to relax.

While you are in hospital you are in an environment that is supportive of quitting. If you attempt to quit while in hospital you are more likely to quit for good.

Quitting will speed your recovery and enable you to go home sooner.

## How do I quit in hospital?

- Your doctor, nurse or midwife can talk to you about your smoking and arrange assistance.
- Ask your doctor whether NRT (Nicotine Replacement Therapy) is suitable for you.
- Tell your family and friends that you are quitting when you go into hospital and ask for their support.
- Before going in to hospital make your home smoke-free so it's ready for your return.

## Improve your recovery

Quitting or cutting down your smoking while in hospital will help your body to recover by:

- improving your immune system, circulation and wound healing
- decreasing the risk of infections and complications
- putting less strain on your heart and lungs
- increasing your body's oxygen supply.