

Drinking alcohol or taking drugs while you are pregnant or breastfeeding may also cause your baby to suffer from:

- Drug addiction
- Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)
- Attention and/or learning difficulties
- Facial abnormalities
- Damaged organs and limbs

## Tobacco and the law

Federal and state laws make it an offence to sell or supply tobacco products to people under 18 years of age. It is also illegal for anyone under 18 years to purchase tobacco products.

There are laws and regulations that restrict smoking in public areas such as shopping centres, cafes and workplaces. It's also illegal to smoke in cars with children.

If you, a family member, or a friend want 'Help and support' turn to the back page.

# Help and support

## **DirectLine**

Tel: 1800 888 236

24 hours, 7 days a week

Confidential AOD counselling and referral line

## **Family Drug Help**

Tel: 1300 660 068

Monday to Friday 9am-9pm

## **Youth Support & Advocacy Service**

Tel: 1800 014 446

24 hour toll free service

Service for people aged 12 – 21 years

## **Turning Point Alcohol & Drug Centre**

Tel: 03 8413 8413

## **Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service**

Freecall: 1800 064 865

## **Harm Reduction Victoria**

Tel: 03 9329 1500

## **Australian Drug Foundation**

[www.druginfo.adf.org.au](http://www.druginfo.adf.org.au)

## **Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation**

Tel: 03 9411 9411

[www.vaccho.org.au](http://www.vaccho.org.au)

Read more about other drugs within your community in the *Healthy Spirit, Healthy Community* booklet, available at [vaccho.org.au](http://vaccho.org.au).



## A guide to tobacco within our community



Healthy Spirit, Healthy Community



australian  
drugFOUNDATION



# Tobacco

## Street names

Ciggies, darts, durries, rollies, smokes, fags, butts, cancer sticks.

## Effects of tobacco

Tobacco affects everyone differently, but you may experience:

- Feeling more alert, happy and relaxed
- Bad breath
- Yellow finger tips
- Dizziness
- Reduced appetite
- Stomach cramps and vomiting
- Fast heart beat
- Tingling or numbness in fingers and toes
- Headaches
- Coughing

If you smoke a lot of tobacco, you may also experience:

- Confusion
- Feeling faint
- Seizures
- Fast breathing
- Respiratory arrest (stop breathing) and death

## Long term effects

If you regularly smoke tobacco, it may cause:

- Shortness of breath
- Coughing fits, asthma and lung diseases
- Regular colds or flu
- Loss of taste and smell
- Yellow, rotting teeth
- Early wrinkles
- Back pain
- Slower-healing wounds
- Mood swings

- Eye disease and hearing loss
- Stomach ulcers
- Low fertility (males and females)
- Irregular periods and early menopause (females)
- Difficulty getting an erection (males)
- Cancer (in many areas of the body)
- Strokes and brain damage
- Heart attack and heart disease
- Needing to smoke more to get the same effect
- Relying on smoking to feel good
- No money for food and bills
- Letting down your family and community

## Passive smoking

Passive smoking is when you breathe in somebody else's cigarette smoke. Passive smoking can cause many of the health problems listed above. This is why it's important to smoke away from other people, especially babies and children who can get sick easier than adults.

## Mixing tobacco with other drugs

The effects of smoking with other drugs – including over-the-counter or prescribed medications – can be unpredictable and dangerous. The nicotine in tobacco can cause some prescription drugs to not work as well as they should. If you are taking the contraceptive pill, smoking increases the chances of blood clots and heart disease.

## Giving up smoking

If you want to give up smoking, but have been doing it for a while, your body has to get used to working without it. This is why you may experience withdrawal symptoms, which should go away within a few days or weeks of quitting.

Symptoms include:

- Cravings for a cigarette
- Irritability, anxiety and depression
- Restless sleep
- Eating more and putting on weight
- Trouble concentrating
- Headaches
- Coughing and sore throat
- Aches and pains
- Upset stomach and bowels

You may still crave a cigarette for months and years after giving up so it's important to ask for help. You can also contact your local Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation to speak to a doctor or Aboriginal Health Worker to find out what options you have available.

## Statistics

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are more likely to smoke tobacco, with almost half being current smokers – more than double the rate of non-Aboriginal Australians.

Between 2002 and 2008, the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who were current smokers decreased from 51 per cent to 47 per cent.

## Pregnancy and breastfeeding

Having a baby is a time of great change. If you are thinking about having a baby, pregnant or breastfeeding, it's important to consider the types of drugs you might be taking and how they could affect your baby. This is important because alcohol and other drugs you take will reach your baby while you are pregnant and breastfeeding.

Drinking alcohol or taking drugs while you are pregnant could cause:

- Miscarriage
- Going into labour early
- Low birth weight