

How will my health improve when I stop?

**After 24** hours carbon monoxide (CO), a poisonous gas which you inhale whenever you smoke, is eliminated from your body. Oxygen levels in your blood return to normal.

**After 48** hours there is no nicotine left in your body. Your ability to taste and smell greatly improves.

**After 72** hours your breathing becomes easier and your energy levels increase.

**After three to nine** months coughs, wheezing and breathing problems improve as your lung function increases by ten per cent.

**After five years** your risk of stroke falls to that of a non-smoker.

**After ten years** your risk of heart attack falls to the same as someone who has never smoked.

**NHS**

**Stop before the op** and give yourself the best chance of a safe and quick recovery.

### How do I stop?

Stopping smoking can be difficult, but with a trained Stop Smoking practitioner it is much easier and you're up to four times more likely to quit successfully!

**For confidential, free NHS support and information, contact:**

**Smokefreelife somerset**  
0800 246 1063  
[www.smokefreelifesomerset.co.uk](http://www.smokefreelifesomerset.co.uk)

**Call the free Smokefree National Helpline on 0300 123 1044**

Yeovil District Hospital  
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# Stop before the op

• **Why should I stop smoking before my Caesarean section?**

01935 475 122  
[yeovilhospital.nhs.uk](http://yeovilhospital.nhs.uk)

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Review: 09/17

**smokefreelife**  
Somerset

 **Yeovil Hospital**  
Healthcare

## Why do I need to quit smoking before surgery?

Smokers often stay in hospital longer after an operation and have a higher risk of complications than non-smokers.

Smokers are more likely to develop chest infections or pneumonia after surgery. Stopping smoking before surgery can help you recover safely and quickly.

### Quitting before your operation:

- ✓ Lowers the risk of complications
- ✓ Improves healing and recovery time
- ✓ Helps you leave hospital sooner and get back to your normal life more quickly

The Hospital is a SmokeFree environment, so you and your visitors won't be able to smoke while you are here. We will offer you Nicotine Replacement Therapy (patches) during your stay. This means your new baby won't be exposed to toxic cigarette smoke, and could help you stay smokefree when you go home.



## Why stop before my Caesarean?

Smoking puts you at more risk DURING the operation because smokers:

- Have a higher risk of anaesthetic complications
- Have lower oxygen levels
- Are more likely to have a heart attack or a stroke

### Smoking also puts you at more risk after the operation because:

- Smokers cough more, which can cause more pain
- Smokers' wounds heal more slowly
- Smokers are more likely to develop a serious wound infection, which can mean re-admission to hospital.

If other people smoke in your home, this will affect your healing. Returning to a smoke-free environment at home helps you recover more quickly and makes re-admission to hospital less likely.

Your new baby is also at risk from other people's smoke. The toxic gases and chemicals in cigarette smoke are invisible and stay in your clothing even if you smoke outside.

Cot death is more likely in households where someone smokes.

## When should I stop?

Ideally, to protect your baby from the effects of smoking in pregnancy, you will stop smoking as early as you can. But as it takes six weeks for your lungs' cleaning system to clear away impurities and phlegm, you should aim to stop at least six to eight weeks before your operation. This makes chest infections and complications less likely.

But even stopping 24 to 48 hours before your surgery enables your blood to carry more oxygen, which improves your blood pressure and heart rate. Not smoking on the day of the operation can reduce the chance of low oxygen levels during the operation.

Remember, stopping smoking at any time, even after your operation, is the best thing you can do for your own and your family's health.

