

Maternal Smoking

Definition/ cut-off value

Any smoking of tobacco products, i.e., cigarettes, pipes, or cigars.

Participant category and priority level

Category	Priority
Pregnant Women	I
Breastfeeding Women	I
Postpartum Women	III, IV,V, VI,VII

Justification

Research has shown that smoking during pregnancy causes health problems and other adverse consequences for the mother, the unborn fetus and the newborn infant such as: pregnancy complications, premature birth, low-birth-weight, stillbirth, infant death, and risk for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) (1). Women who smoke are at risk for chronic and degenerative diseases such as: cancer, cardiovascular disease and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. They are also at risk for other physiological effects such as loss of bone density (2).

Maternal smoking exposes the infant to nicotine and other compounds, including cyanide and carbon monoxide, in-utero and via breastmilk (3). In-utero exposure to maternal smoking is associated with reduced lung function among infants (4). In addition, maternal smoking exposes infants and children to environmental tobacco smoke (ETS). (See #904, Environmental Tobacco Smoke).

Because smoking increases oxidative stress and metabolic turnover of vitamin C, the requirement for this vitamin is higher for women who smoke (5). The WIC food package provides a good source of vitamin C. Women who participate in WIC may also benefit from counseling and referral to smoking cessation programs.

References

1. Manual of Clinical Dietetics 6th ed., American Dietetic Association. 2000.
 2. Women and Smoking: A Report of the Surgeon General – 2001.
http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/sgr/sgr_2001/sgr_women_chapters.htm
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3. Breastfeeding Handbook for Physicians, American Academy of Pediatrics and American College of Obstetrics and Gynecologists. 2006.
4. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *The Health Consequences of Smoking: A Report of the Surgeon General--Executive Summary*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Coordinating Center for Health Promotion, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2004.
5. *Dietary Reference Intakes for Vitamin C, Vitamin E, Selenium and Carotenoids* (2000) Institute of Medicine, the National Academy of Science.