

fact sheet

Monash IVF actively supports research and development in reproductive medicine to ensure improved results for all Monash IVF patients

smoking and fertility

Having IVF treatment can be one of the most stressful experiences in a person's life. Having to deal with day-to-day and infertility is enough with out considering quitting cigarette smoking. Often a person or couple will wait for this stressful time to pass and set a goal to quit cigarette smoking at the time of embryo transfer or a positive pregnancy test.

You may not know that cigarette smoking impacts on your ability to fall pregnant. Studies have shown that women who smoke cigarettes will take a longer time to conceive compared with those women who have never smoked. Up to a 22% reduction has been seen in smoking women's potential fertility.

Toxins from smoking cigarettes have shown to have bad effects on the female and male sex organs. In females, cigarette smoking damages tubal motility and effects implantation of the embryo. This is primarily due to the effects of cigarette smoking reducing blood flow to the reproductive organs. Studies have also found that these toxins can affect embryo cleavage and the growth of the inner cell mass in the early stages of embryo development.



Cigarette smoking has also been shown to damage egg quality, decrease the ability of the egg to be fertilised and increase the chance of miscarriage. One study also showed that there was a 45% decrease in the number of eggs aspirated at IVF egg collection.

It is also important to know that cigarette smoking can also damage sperm production. One study stated that male cigarette smoking might be a precipitating factor in preventing fertilisation.

At this point, whether you are either about to start treatment, in the middle of your cycle or waiting for a pregnancy test, it is not too late to quit cigarette smoking. It is important that you put a plan in place to ensure you have support and assistance during this time. You can speak with your fertility doctor, fertility nurse and counsellors, who will be able to give you ongoing support and education on the best way for you to achieve this goal. You can also contact **Quitline** advisors who are very experienced in assisting people who want to quit smoking, you can call them on **131 848**.

This choice to quit needs to be a life style change. It is important that when you quit cigarette smoking that you stay smoke free throughout your pregnancy. We are well aware that cigarette smoking is harmful to the baby during pregnancy. The chance of miscarriage is also increased. It is more likely among cigarette smokers that they may spontaneously abort (55%) compared to none smokers (20%). And it is even important to be aware that passive smoking can also have an effect on your well-being and your babies. Children of cigarette smokers have a greater chance of developing cancer than children of non-smokers.

Quitting Cigarette smoking can be difficult. With ongoing support it can be easier. It is very important that you ask for the help and support that you feel you need. Please do not hesitate to approach your fertility carers, so that we can help you to achieve your goals.