



A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

No Smoking: Baby Zone

Smoking Prevalence Among Women of Reproductive Age — United States, 2006

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[Announcer] This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC — safer, healthier people.

[Dr. Gaynes] Welcome to *A Cup of Health with CDC*, a weekly feature of the MMWR, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm your host, Dr. Robert Gaynes.

Smoking is harmful for everyone, and women in their childbearing years are no exception. A recent CDC study found that almost one fourth of women aged 18 to 44 smoke. Whether they already have children or are expecting a child, these women are at increased risk for serious health consequences. Dr. Shanta Dube is a researcher with CDC's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. She's joining us today to discuss the issue of smoking among reproductive-aged women. Welcome to the show, Shanta.

[Dr. Dube] Thank you, Bob.

[Dr. Gaynes] Shanta, over the past several years, has smoking among reproductive-aged women increased or decreased?

[Dr. Dube] Bob, we found in the study that from 1996 to 2006, the percent of women of childbearing age who smoke has decreased.

[Dr. Gaynes] Is smoking more common among any *particular* age group?

[Dr. Dube] We didn't find in this study that smoking was more common among any particular age group; however, we did find differences with respect to quit attempts. In particular, those who were aged 18 to 24 were more likely to have attempted to quit but less likely to have quit smoking successfully.

[Dr. Gaynes] What are the health problems for women in their reproductive years who smoke?

[Dr. Dube] These women are at increased risk for heart disease, stroke, and numerous types of cancer. But importantly, many times women do not know they're pregnant until the sixth or eighth week of pregnancy. If they continue to smoke, they increase the risk to their unborn child and increase the likelihood of spontaneous abortions, still births, and babies having low birthweight.

[Dr. Gaynes] What are the health issues common among children of women who smoke?

[Dr. Dube] These children are exposed to secondhand smoke, which increases the likelihood that they'll have respiratory problems, or it may worsen asthma if they already have asthma.

[Dr. Gaynes] Are children of women who smoke more likely to start smoking themselves?

[Dr. Dube] Yes, Bob. Children living with adults that model smoking behaviors are more likely to become smokers themselves.

[Dr. Gaynes] Do you have any tips for reproductive-aged women to help them quit smoking?

[Dr. Dube] Smokers can increase the likelihood of successfully quitting by using individual, group, or telephone counseling. CDC encourages smokers to call 1-800-QuitNow for free support. In addition, we recommend speaking to your physician or healthcare professional for more information on the best approach to quit, especially for pregnant women.

[Dr. Gaynes] Where can listeners get more information about the risks of smoking?

[Dr. Dube] We have a website — it's www.cdc.gov/tobacco.

[Dr. Gaynes] Shanta, thanks for sharing this information with our listeners today.

[Dr. Dube] Thank you, Bob, for having me.

[Dr. Gaynes] That's it for this week's show. Be sure and join us next week. Until then, be well. This is Dr. Robert Gaynes for *A Cup of Health with CDC*.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO, 24/7.