

Smoking status in pregnancy, daily stressors and well-being. Abstract

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SMOKING STATUS IN PREGNANCY, DAILY STRESSORS AND WELL-BEING, K.M. Paarlberg MD, A.J.J.M. Vingerhoets PhD, J. Passchier PhD, A.G.J.J. Heinen PhD, G.A. Dekker MD PhD, H.P. van Geijn MD PhD, Dept. of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Free University Hospital, Amsterdam; Dept. of Psychology, Tilburg University, The Netherlands.

Cigarette smoking in pregnancy is one of the main, avoidable, hazards for fetal health. The focus in the present study is on the relationship between self-reported daily stressors, psychological and somatic well-being, and smoking behavior in pregnancy. Nulliparous women (N=396) completed questionnaires on psychosocial factors in each trimester of pregnancy. Smoking behavior was categorized as follows: (1) non-smokers, (2) (successful) quitters and (3) smokers. Of the 161 women (41%) who smoked prior to pregnancy, 37% did quit smoking in pregnancy and 63% continued smoking. Results indicate that quitters were lighter smokers. Low number of daily smoked cigarettes prior to pregnancy was the only factor predicting quitting smoking successfully before the third month of pregnancy (odds ratio 0.89; 95% confidence interval 0.85-0.94), independent of socioeconomic status and psychological factors. Non-smokers reported significantly fewer daily stressors and rated themselves as less severely depressed than quitters and smokers. Differences in well-being during pregnancy were not found between quitters and non-smokers. Smokers, however, expressed significantly more depressive, anxious, and somatic symptoms than the two other groups. The results of this study support the view that increased exposure to daily stressors and decreased well-being may prevent pregnant women from successfully quitting smoking and therefore may have indirect negative effects on fetal health.