



October 2010

- ***Smoking is the most important preventable behavior that leads to low birthweight babies – a leading cause of infant death.***
- ***Overall, 32% of Arkansas mothers smoked three months before becoming pregnant; 21% smoked during the last three months of pregnancy; and 27% of the women smoked after their delivery.***

The Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) is an on-going, population-based surveillance system sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The PRAMS survey asks mothers who recently had a live birth about maternal behaviors and experiences that occur before, during, and after pregnancy that might affect their health and the health their babies.

ARKANSAS PRAMS NOTES

Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System

Pregnant Women and Smoking in Arkansas, 2004-2008

Cigarette smoking before, during, and after pregnancy can cause health problems for the newborn as well as pregnancy complications for the mother.

Smoking is the most important known preventable behavior that increases the chance that a woman will have a baby that is low birth weight (less than 5 ½ pounds), the leading cause of fetal (unborn infant) and neonatal (1 to 28 days old) death. The U.S. Public Health Service has estimated that if all pregnant women quit smoking, the number of stillbirths would be reduced by 11% and newborn deaths by 5%.

Babies born to women who smoke *during* pregnancy

- Have a greater chance for problems such as congenital abnormalities (birth defects) like cleft palates and congenital heart defects.
- Have a greater chance of being premature or low birth weight.
 - Premature babies are at greater risk for chronic, lifelong disabilities such as cerebral palsy, mental retardation, and learning disabilities.
- Are more likely to die from sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS or crib death), the leading cause of death for infants ages 1 to 12 months.
- Are more likely to have respiratory problems than babies whose mothers did not smoke.

Infants exposed to tobacco smoke *after* birth

- Are more likely to suffer from asthma and lower respiratory infection (bronchitis and pneumonia).
- Are more likely to die from SIDS, also known as crib death.

For pregnant women, cigarette smoking increases the risk of having placenta problems such as

- Placenta previa (low-lying placenta that covers all or part of the opening of the womb) and
- Placental abruption (placenta pulls away from the womb wall).
- Both of these conditions can cause heavy bleeding that can endanger the mother and her baby.
- Additionally, women who smoke may have difficulty getting pregnant.

This newsletter summarizes information on women who smoked before, during and after pregnancy.

- *Mothers most likely to smoke while pregnant are White, less than 25 years of age, and have less than 12 years of education.*
- *About 34% of women who smoked three months before becoming pregnant quit by the last three months of pregnancy.*
- *Approximately 54% of women who quit smoking during pregnancy resumed smoking after delivery.*

Help to Stop Smoking

The Arkansas Tobacco Quitline is available seven days a week, 24 hours a day. Counseling services are available from 7 a.m. to 2 a.m. Services are available in English, Spanish and additional languages as needed, including Marshallese. The Quitline number is 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669). More information is available at:

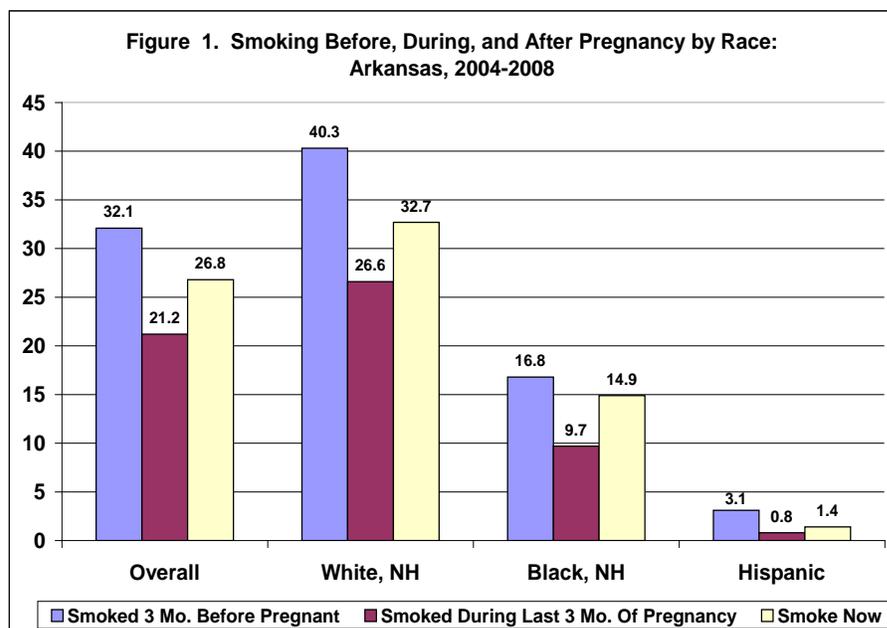
<http://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/programsServices/tobaccoprevent/Pages/TobaccoQuitline.aspx> or www.stampoutsmoking.com.

Smoking Before, During and After Pregnancy

Approximately one-third of women in the survey smoked in the three months before pregnancy. Only a minority of those women, 34%, stopped smoking during pregnancy. Some women resumed smoking after delivery but the percentage was still less than those who smoked prior to pregnancy.

Who smoked before, during and after pregnancy?

- Overall, 32% of women smoked three months before becoming pregnant; 21% smoked during the last three months of pregnancy; and 27% of the women smoked after their delivery (Figure 1).
- In 2005, Arkansas was second only to West Virginia in the prevalence of smoking three months before pregnancy (32%) and third in prevalence of smoking during pregnancy (about 22%).¹
- White women were more likely than Black and Hispanic women to smoke during each of these time periods.



Even though White women were much more likely to smoke, they were less likely to have been talked to by a healthcare professional during prenatal visits about how smoking during pregnancy could affect their baby.

- Only 69% percent of White women reported being counseled by a healthcare professional regarding the dangers of smoking during pregnancy, while 78% of Black women and 79% of Hispanic women reported receiving this information (not shown).

WHAT MOTHERS SAID ABOUT SMOKING

(Per CDC guidelines, mothers' comments are not edited for grammar or spelling)

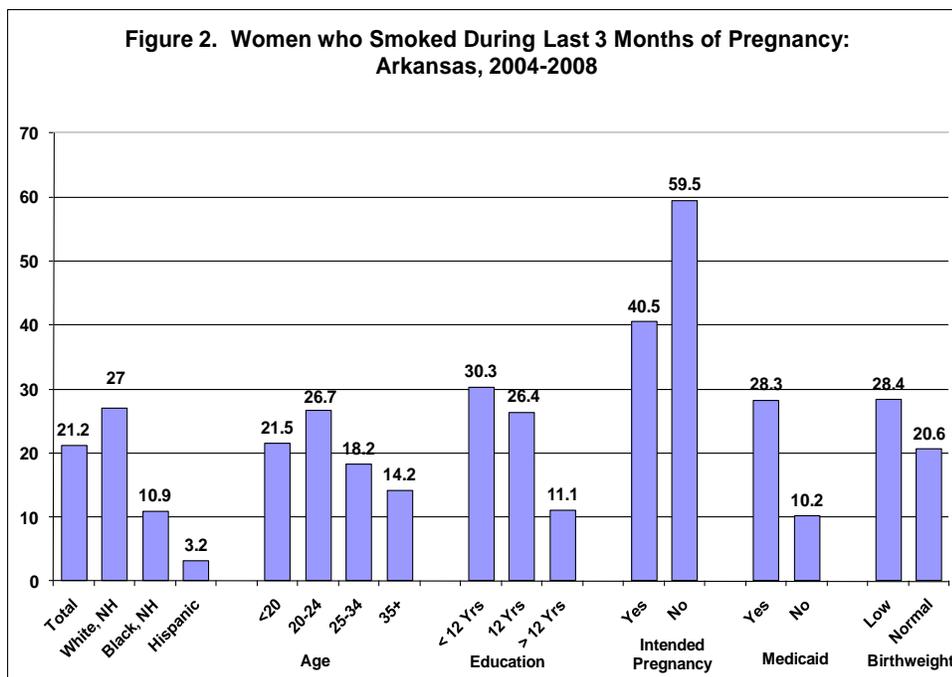
"When I found out I was pregnant I quit smoking, and after I had my baby I did not start back. I really do believe that smoking causes babies to be sick more and causes sids. I will not smoke again, and nobody is allowed to smoke around my child. I have friends that smoke around there kids and there kids stay sick or have ashma."

"I smoked alot while pregnant with my daughter. AS a result, she was born 6 weeks premature and weighed 3 lba 6 oz. She stayed in the hospital for a month. People really don't think smoking effects pregnancy But it does is so many ways. I wish there was a way to stress to people the importance of NOT SMOKING!!"

"I think one reason my baby was born healthy is because I didn't drink or smoke during or before my pregnancy. Also, I ate healthy and I went to all of my prenatal visits and asked questions about my pregnancy. I think that this is a great survey. I've always wondered what causes some babies and not others to be born healthy"

Selected characteristics of women who smoked.

- For all time periods, the women most likely to smoke were less than 25 years of age, had 12 years or less of education, had unintended pregnancies, were on Medicaid, had no first trimester prenatal care, and had low birth weight babies. Over sixty percent had incomes of less than \$15,000 (not shown).
- Figure 2 below shows the characteristics of women who were still smoking by the last three months of pregnancy.



Women Who Quit Smoking During Pregnancy and Those Who Resumed after Delivery

Women who quit smoking

- Almost 34% of women who smoked three months before pregnancy quit by the last three months of pregnancy.
- Women who stopped smoking were more likely than those who did not to have education beyond high school, 38% vs. 21%; incomes over \$50,000, 13.9% vs. 6.3%; and to be married, 55% vs. 46%. Women who quit were also less likely to have low birthweight babies, 7% compared to 11%.
- Only 29% of women on Medicaid quit smoking by the last three months of pregnancy compared to 49% of women not on Medicaid.
- Women who resumed were more likely to be younger (23% under 20), less educated (22% less than 12th grade), lower income (33% earned less than \$10,000 per year).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Prevent smoking initiation² among young people

Increasing the unit price for tobacco products and conducting mass media campaigns in combination with school and community interventions can prevent young people from initiating smoking.

Help pregnant women quit smoking and prevent relapse.

Because pregnant women who have received brief smoking cessation counseling are more likely to quit smoking, clinicians should offer effective smoking cessation intervention to pregnant smokers at the first prenatal visit and throughout pregnancy.

Medicaid coverage of smoking cessation counseling services is associated with lower smoking rates among women. Women should also be encouraged to call the smoking cessation Quitline.

Many women who are unable to quit smoking are suffering from depression. It is important that these women receive help for their depression, which may make it easier to quit smoking.

Additional Research

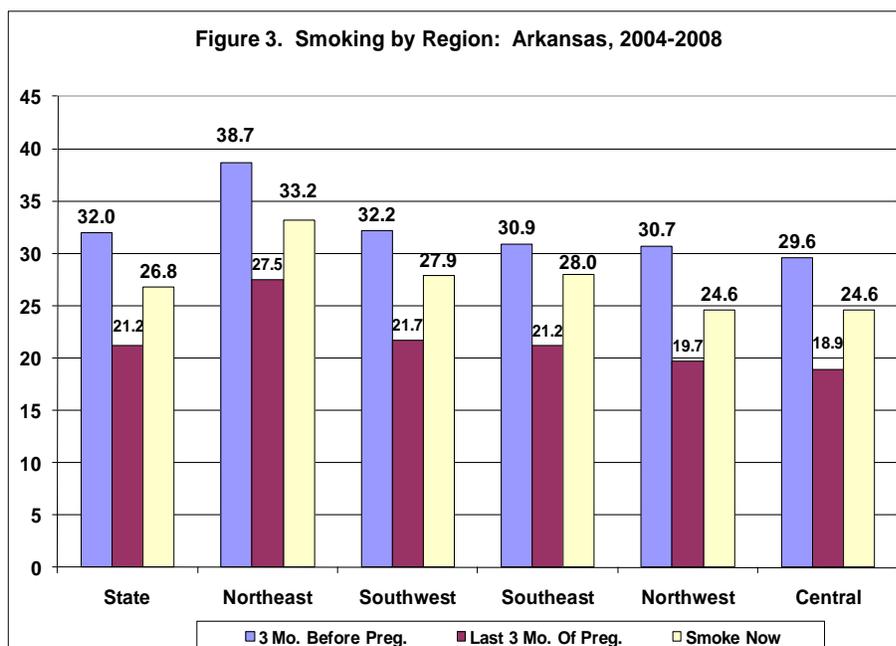
White women were less likely than Black or Hispanic women to receive counseling on smoking during pregnancy. Further analysis needs to be conducted to determine the cause of this disparity.

Women who quit smoking during pregnancy and resumed smoking after delivery

- Fifty-four percent (54%) of the women who quit smoking during pregnancy resumed smoking after delivery.
- Black women (80%) were more likely than White (51%) or Hispanic (34%) women to resume smoking.

Women who smoked by Arkansas Public Health Region.

- Women in the Northeast region were more likely to smoke before, during, and after pregnancy than women in other regions.



- Women in the Central and Northwest regions were most likely to quit smoking during pregnancy (36%), followed by the Southwest and Southeast regions (32%), and the Northeast regions (29%).
- The Southeast region had the highest percentage of women who resumed smoking (69%), followed by women in the Central and Southwest regions (57%), the Northeast region (54%), and the Northwest region (49%).

References

¹See *Trends in Smoking Before, During, and After Pregnancy*, MMWR May 2009, at: www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/ss/ss5804.pdf.

²See *Preventing Smoking and Exposure to Secondhand Smoke Before, During, and After Pregnancy* at: www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/publications/factsheets/prevention/pdf/smoking.pdf