

## Smoking During Pregnancy

**Objective:** *Increase the percentage of women who abstain from smoking while pregnant to at least 90%*

The health implications associated with active and passive smoking are especially significant for pregnant women and infants. Cigarette smoking during gestation increases the woman's risk for miscarriage and other complications of pregnancy and is detrimental to the health of the fetus. It puts infants at increased risk for stillbirth, low birthweight, respiratory distress syndrome, sudden infant death syndrome, and even impaired cognitive development. The earlier a woman stops smoking during pregnancy, the greater the reduction of risk to her baby. Despite these facts, nearly 14% of all pregnant women in Virginia continue to smoke during pregnancy. As the data below indicate, however, the proportion of women in Virginia who abstain from smoking while pregnant continues to rise. Programs which help women abstain from smoking during pregnancy have the potential to improve maternal and child health.

