



Healthy Beginnings

Volume XVIII - Issue 1 - Fall 2016



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Are e-cigarettes better for you than traditional cigarettes?

In times of stress, some people reach for the one thing that can calm them down—a cigarette. Even though smoking can provide that instant sense of relaxation, thoughts of all the physical damage it causes in the body can become overwhelming. Because of this, many people are now looking for a cleaner alternative.

Introducing the e-cigarette—a device that combines nicotine, flavoring liquid, and glycerides and produces a vapor. E-cigarettes don't contain tar and some of the other unhealthy ingredients of traditional cigarettes. For this reason, many people, including pregnant women, are turning to this new type of smoking device.

A focus group participant stated that not having to worry about tar or pesticides were among her reasons for picking up the e-cigarette. Other women have stated that they chose the e-cigarette as a stop-smoking aid. Typical stop-smoking aids include patches and gum, both of which have their own drawbacks.

Pregnancy is a big motivation for quitting traditional cigarettes. Women want their babies to be as healthy as possible. This usually means that smoking is the first bad habit to break. Some women try to cut down on the number of cigarettes they smoke a day, but many more will go to the e-cigarette, as it resembles the act of smoking traditional cigarettes while being seen as a healthier habit.



But are they better for you?

Smoking any substance is not good for you, no matter what it is. While e-cigarettes may not have the tar and pesticides of traditional cigarettes, they still contain the addictive ingredient nicotine, and the specific chemicals in the e-liquid are not yet widely known. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) conducted tests in 2009 that determined often times, what was actually contained in the e-liquid did not match what was printed on the label. The American Lung Association noted that two studies have found formaldehyde and other carcinogens in e-cigarette smoke, contradicting the belief that the vapor contains no harmful chemicals. Since August of this year, the FDA has begun to apply and enforce regulations on e-cigarettes.

If you want help quitting for good, please visit lung.org/smoke-free or call 1-866-NYQUITS

Sources: Fallin, A., Miller, A., Assef S., and Ashford, K. (2016). Perceptions of Electronic Cigarettes Among Medicaid-Eligible Pregnant and Postpartum Women. *Journal of Obstetric, Gynecologic and Neonatal Nursing*, 45 (3); American Lung Association

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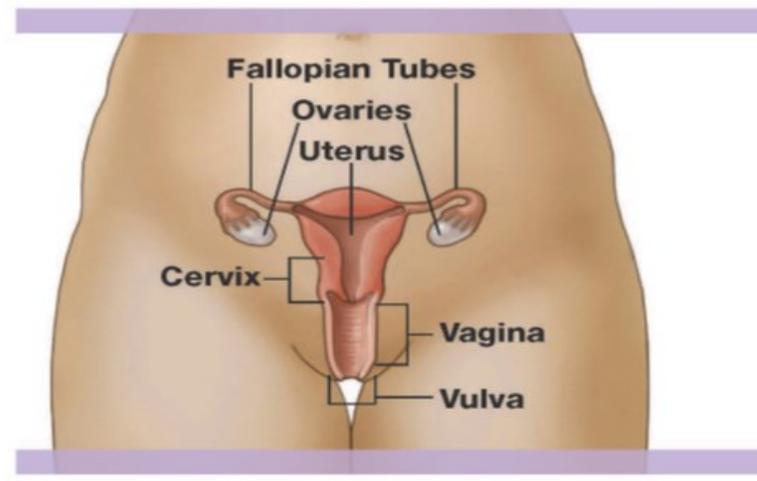
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The mission of the Mohawk Valley Perinatal Network is to improve birth outcomes and maternal, child and family health

Gynecologic Cancer — What is it, What Can I Do, and What Do I Need to Know?

Gynecologic cancer refers to many different cancers that affect a woman's reproductive organs. All women can get gynecological cancers. The only exception being women who have had a hysterectomy.



The following chart explains the differences of each type of gynecologic cancer:

Type	Description	Symptoms
Cervical cancer	The only preventable gynecologic cancer. This cancer starts in the cervix.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bleeding, especially after sex • Discharge that is not normal for you
Ovarian cancer	A cancer that starts in the ovaries, where eggs are produced.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vaginal bleeding • Abnormal discharge • Pain or pressure in the pelvic or abdominal area • Back pain • Bloating • Change in bathroom habits
Uterine cancer	Cancer that starts in the uterus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abnormal or irregular discharge or bleeding • Pain or pressure in your pelvis
Vaginal cancer	Cancer that starts in the vagina, also called the birth canal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vaginal bleeding or discharge that is not normal for you, • Change in bathroom habits • Pain in your pelvis or abdomen
Vulvar cancer	Rare cancer that starts in the vulva	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Itching, burning, or bleeding on the vulva that doesn't go away, • Color changes on the skin of the vulva • Skin changes on the vulva, sores, new lumps, or ulcers on the vulva. • Pain in your pelvis

Photo Source: Center for Disease Control Continued on next page

What can I do?

According to the CDC, there aren't any known ways to prevent or cure these cancers, however, you can reduce your risk by doing the following:

- Pay attention to your body and know what is normal for you
- Make healthy lifestyle choices
- Know your family health history
- Get the HPV vaccine (HPV is a common sexually transmitted virus that can cause cancers. HPV infections that don't go away pose an increased risk for gynecologic cancer)
- Get regular pap tests
- Get the HPV test if it is recommended by your doctor

What if I get diagnosed while I'm pregnant?

According to the American Cancer Society, cancer can be treated during pregnancy. Chemotherapy is a safe treatment option as long as it is given after the first trimester. Chemotherapy during the first trimester can lead to serious birth defects.

The Family Planning Benefit Program can help you get services to plan your family. It is **FREE** to females and males who qualify.

What services can I get?

- All forms of birth control (pills, patch, condoms, diaphragms, the patch).
- Information about family planning and choices for birth control
- Emergency contraception
- Check-ups and pap smears during a family planning visit
- Laboratory tests related to family planning services.
- HIV counseling and testing related to family planning visits
- Sterilization

Who can get FPBP services? Anyone who:

- Lives in New York State
- Is a U.S. citizen, national, Native American, or has satisfactory immigration status.
- Is able to have children (males are eligible, too)
- Meets income guidelines
- Does not qualify for or chooses not to apply for Medicaid or Family Health Plus

All of your care is confidential!

For more information call:
Planned Parenthood to set up an appointment to enroll in FPBP services:
1 (800) 230-PLAN

The New York State Medicaid Helpline can also be used for questions:
1 (800) 541-2831



We'd like to hear from you!
 Send information about upcoming events or ideas for future articles to: MVPN Newsletter, 1000 Cornelia Street, 2nd Floor, Utica, NY 13502; Fax: 732-5640; Email: aowens@newfamily.org

Community Health Worker Services

Community Health Workers help women of child bearing age improve their health, as well as the health of their family. They are an outreach and home visiting program serving Oneida & Herkimer county residents. If you need help getting health insurance, nutrition information, food stamps, or finding a doctor, call them today.

(315) 272-2661

Do we have your email address? Our Newsletter is "Going Green"!

Please contact Megan at mcapuana@newfamily.org or 732-4657 x228 to share your email address if you would like to receive a digital copy of Mohawk Valley Perinatal Network's "Healthy Beginnings" newsletter.

Thank you!



The Baby Weight Station at Oneida County Health Department

- Get answers to your questions from a Certified Lactation Counselor
- Check your baby's weight

We want to work with you to solve problems and build confidence so you can breastfeed as long as you would like!

Drop in Fridays 1-4 or call for an appointment.

Oneida County Health Department
 406 Elizabeth Street, Utica, New York

Please call 798-5906 or 798-5747 for more information or to make an appointment!



Are you in need of infant clothing?

Check out St. Clare's Cupboard and Cleophas Closet at the Thea Bowman House—This special program, operating out of our Lafayette Street site, provides an emergency food pantry for West Utica residents and second hand clothing, free of charge, to anyone in need.

Hours: 1:00-2:00 pm Monday through Friday

Address: 731 Lafayette Street, Utica

Phone: (315) 797-0748

Pregnant?

Protect yourself and your baby.

Get early prenatal care.

Prenatal Care - Medicaid Prenatal Services Program

Early and regular check-ups are important to you and your baby's health.

Medicaid Prenatal Services Program offers complete pregnancy care and other health care services to women and teens who live in New York State.

And there's no cost to eligible women who participate in Medicaid Prenatal Services!

Call MVPN at 732-4657 or toll free at 1-877-267-6193 for more information.