

# Vaping, nicotine patch linked to cot death

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Pregnant women who resort to e-cigarettes or nicotine patches to avoid smoking may increase the risk of their newborns becoming cot-death victims.

Any kind of nicotine exposure during pregnancy, whether from smoking, vaping, or skin patches, heightens the chances of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), early research suggests.

Scientists found that nicotine in the womb can affect an unborn baby's central nervous system and cardio-respiratory responses to stressful environments.

This could leave infants susceptible to asphyxia, especially those lacking the neurotransmitter brain chemical serotonin.

“Sudden infant death syndrome is such a distressing tragedy for families. We still don’t fully understand the causes, but this research is important because it helps mothers reduce the risk,” said Stella Lee, one of the researchers from the Geisel School of Medicine in the US.

The findings, published in the Journal of Physiology, showed that nicotine exposure can trigger the failure of auto-resuscitation – a key safety mechanism that protects an infant from oxygen deprivation.

Babies who cannot auto-resuscitate are unable to recover from environmental stresses that ~~Tools X~~ cause a temporary loss of oxygen, such as getting tangled in bedding, or a breathing obstruction.

The research involved exposing unborn and new born rats to nicotine through maternal blood or milk and then testing their response to low oxygen.

More than 10 per cent of pregnant women still smoke during pregnancy despite the known risks to unborn babies, said the scientists.

Most cot deaths occur during the first six months of life and low birth weight and prematurely born infants are at greatest risk.

You can access the study [here \(https://physoc.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1113/JP275885\)](https://physoc.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1113/JP275885).

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