

## Perinatal Smoking<sup>1</sup>

The dangers of smoking have been well documented in the media and the hazards of smoking while pregnant are well established. While smoking is harmful during the entire pregnancy, nicotine is most harmful during the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> trimesters of pregnancy when development is most crucial. The Healthy People 2010 target is 99% abstinence from smoking during pregnancy. According to self-report data from NYSDOH Vital Statistics, about 25% of pregnant women in the Capital Region smoke. Using a recent BRFSS report<sup>i</sup> on cigarette smoking in adults in the New York State in 2005:

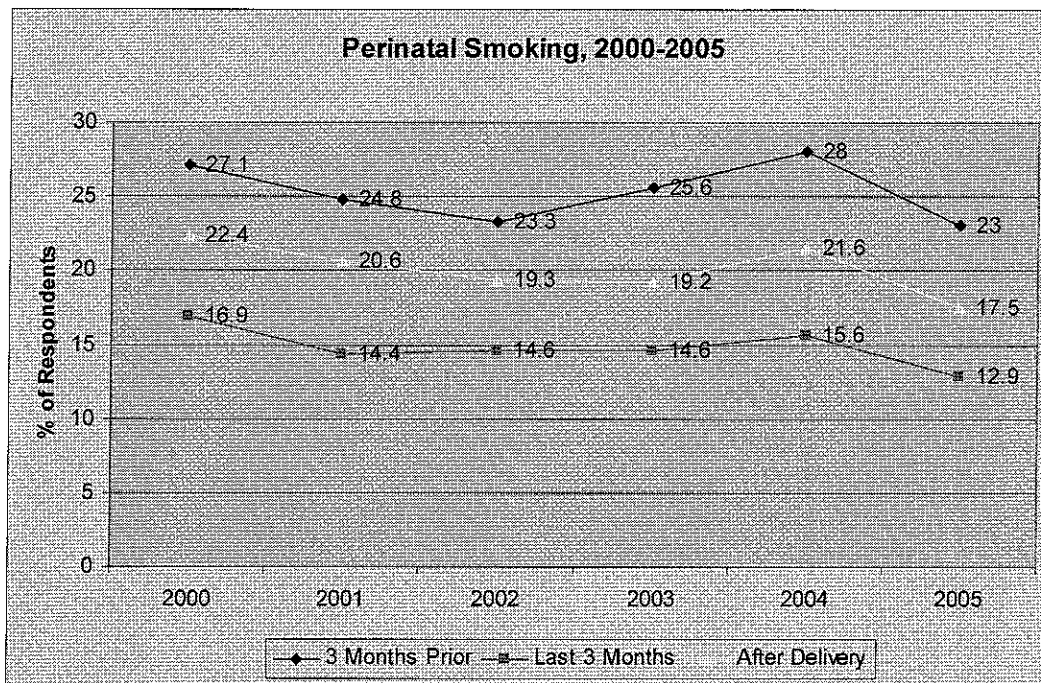
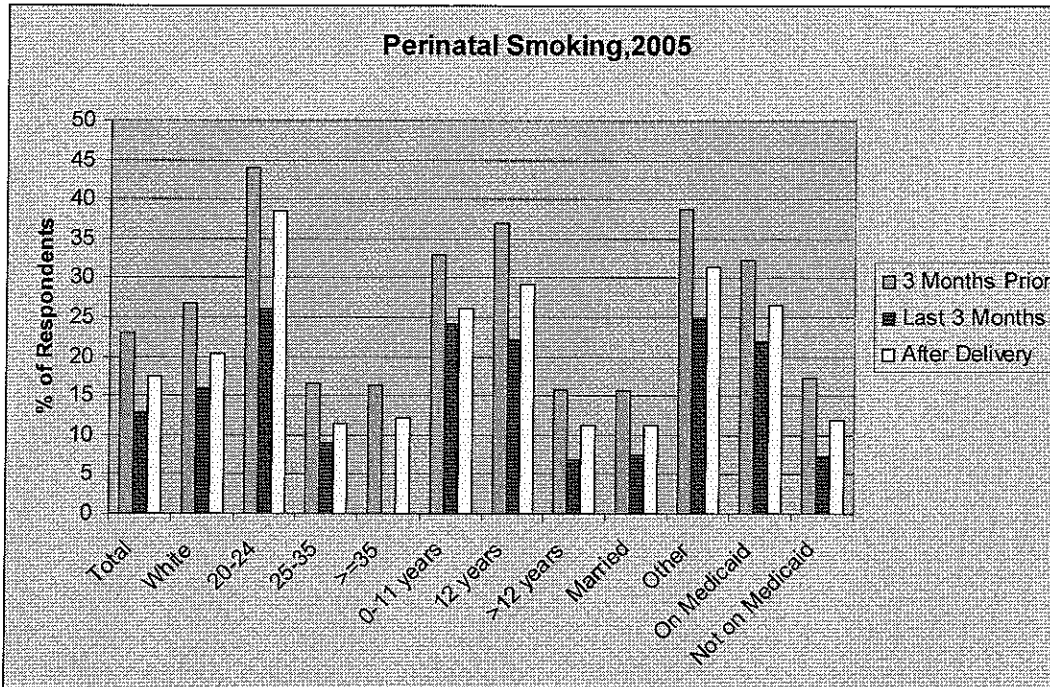
- Rates of smoking in upstate New York (19.2 %) are higher than in New York City (16.2%).
- 17.6 % of women report being smokers.
- Smoking rates decline as age increases.
- Smoking rates decrease as educational attainment and income increase.

Perinatal smoking rates have fluctuated little in the past 4 years among upstate women. About 23.0% of 2005 PRAMS respondents reported that they smoked within 3 months before becoming pregnant. About 12.9% reported smoking during the last 3 months of pregnancy.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Due to smoking information on the birth certificate being underreported, NYSDOH Bureau of Biostatistics prefer not to release this information.

<sup>2</sup> Data for Black women and Other women, as well as women greater than or equal to 35 years old was not reported due to small numbers.



While about half of PRAMS respondents who smoked before they were pregnant presumably did not smoke during the last 3 months of pregnancy, smoking levels did increase somewhat after delivery. This has implications for the health of the baby and other children in the home, as second-hand smoke has been linked to increased rates of asthma and other respiratory ailments, ear infections, and SIDS. This indicates a need for enhanced outreach and education during the 1st trimester of pregnancy, and ideally preconceptionally, regarding smoking cessation.

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i [http://www.health.state.ny.us/nysdoh/brfss/reports/docs/brfssbrief\\_smoking\\_0707.pdf](http://www.health.state.ny.us/nysdoh/brfss/reports/docs/brfssbrief_smoking_0707.pdf)