

~~rauch~~ frei!

BZgA

Bundeszentrale
für
gesundheitliche
Aufklärung

Smoke-free during pregnancy and after birth

Information to help on your
way to stop smoking

Me

&

*my
baby*

What to expect from this brochure

What risks is your baby subject to if you smoke during pregnancy and while breastfeeding? How can you stop smoking?

You can find answers to all of this here.

The back of the brochure contains a list of support services and contact details.

I'm pregnant and I'm a smoker

You know that smoking is associated with high-level health risks. Smoking endangers the course of your pregnancy and the health of your child. The toxins in tobacco smoke damage blood vessels, which leads to an increased risk of cardiovascular diseases. Smoking can also cause cancer and respiratory diseases.

When you smoke a cigarette, the **toxins** from the tobacco travel directly into your baby's bloodstream via the umbilical cord. For example, **carbon monoxide** displaces the oxygen in the red blood cells which reduces the supply of nutrients and oxygen to the baby.

Nicotine causes a narrowing of the arteries, reducing the blood supply to the uterus. This creates a veritable bottleneck in the womb and the baby receives fewer nutrients.

What does this mean for your baby?

Smoking during your pregnancy increases the risk of complications during pregnancy and childbirth, and can lead to serious health issues for your baby. For example, babies are more likely to be born premature, or weigh less at birth and sudden infant death syndrome is also more common.

Good to know!

Make sure to also discuss your situation with your gynaecologist or midwife, for example at one of your regular prenatal check-ups.

Make sure your baby gets the best possible start in life

There are lots of good reasons to stop smoking.

- Your unborn baby will have a better supply of oxygen and nutrients.
- It is more likely that your baby will be born with a normal weight.
- The baby's lungs will develop better.
- The child will be less likely to develop respiratory problems and asthma.
- You will reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome.



Frequently asked questions

before giving birth



Is it better to stop smoking gradually or immediately, from one day to the next?

Every cigarette smoked is one too many – especially when pregnant. It is best to stop smoking completely now.

I'm often quite stressed out and need a cigarette to relax.

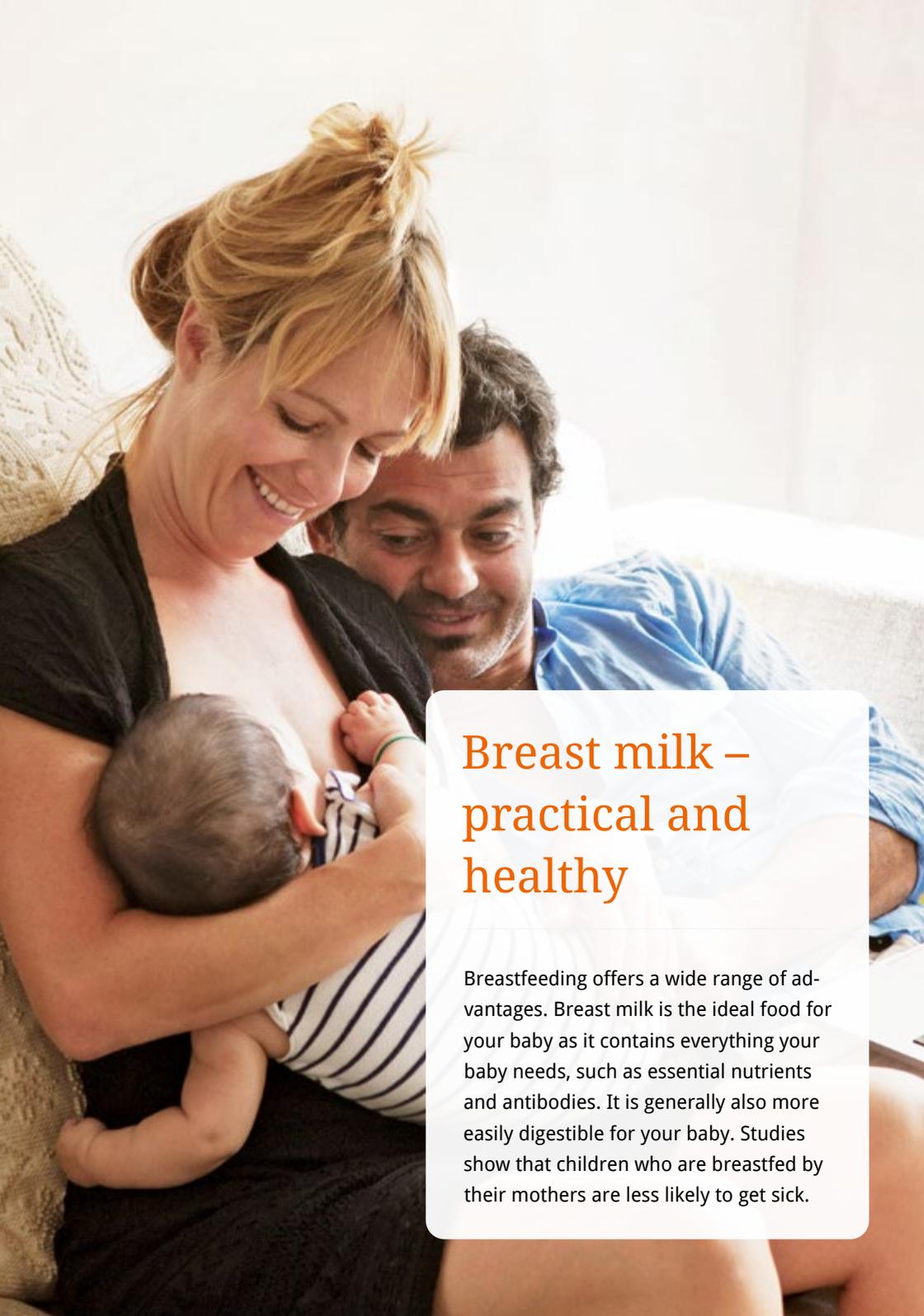
Unfortunately, smoking is only superficially effective. You do not achieve a real, extended and sustainable state of relaxation through smoking. There are techniques for relaxation that can help you deal with stress in a more conscious and composed manner, such as yoga or meditation.

I'm already in the twelfth week of my pregnancy, is it still worth quitting smoking?

Your child should be exposed to as few toxins as possible. The basic principle is: The sooner you stop, the better. And always remember: It's never too late.

I smoke a lot, will the baby start to feel some benefit if I smoke significantly less or switch to e-cigarettes?

No, smoking less is not enough to protect your child. Every drag is harmful. We advise pregnant women not to use e-cigarettes as there is currently too little information on the potential health risks.



Breast milk – practical and healthy

Breastfeeding offers a wide range of advantages. Breast milk is the ideal food for your baby as it contains everything your baby needs, such as essential nutrients and antibodies. It is generally also more easily digestible for your baby. Studies show that children who are breastfed by their mothers are less likely to get sick.

Your baby is here!

A new phase of life begins – make it smoke-free.

Not smoking is always the healthier choice. This is especially true when breastfeeding. That is because toxic substances from the inhaled tobacco smoke pass into your breast milk and enter your baby's body.

If possible, do not smoke at all while you are still breastfeeding.

If you do smoke, you should try your best to smoke as little as possible.

Conscientious **smoke breaks before breastfeeding** can reduce the exposure of the milk to some of the **harmful substances**. For example, the concentration of nicotine drops significantly over the course of a one-hour break from smoking.

If you still smoke, you should **not sleep in the same bed as your child**. Studies have shown that this increases the risk of sudden infant death syndrome.

Never smoke near your child.

(Source: BfR: Stillen und Rauchen – Ratgeber für Mütter bzw. Eltern. Aktualisierte Elterninformation der Nationalen Stillkommission (in German only) from March 2001 (updated March 2007))

Stop
smoking
in just

four steps

Step 1: Choose a date to stop smoking

Choose a date that would be ideal to stop smoking. Why not today or tomorrow?
Pro tip: Writing down a specific day for quitting increases your chance of success.

Step 2: Preparation

To ensure you are well prepared for your task ahead, try and think constructively about how you will get through the first few days without a cigarette. Jot down your own answers to these questions:

- How will you handle your cravings for tobacco?
- What can you do to relax instead of reaching for a cigarette?
- What can your response be when things get stressful?
- Which family members and friends can help you stop smoking?

Step 3: Quitting

You've stopped smoking – a good and important decision for you and your baby. Make sure you fill your day with small pleasures. For example, give yourself enough time for regular walks, try out new recipes or meet up with friends. All of these things can help you to “forget” about cigarettes. Many women also find it helpful to think about their baby – an important reason that definitely makes keeping at it worthwhile.

Step 4: Keep at it

Some people compare trying to stop smoking to running a hurdle race – one where the hurdles get smaller and appear at greater intervals over time. Whatever the case may be, getting that first smoke-free day under your belt is already a major milestone! Why not reward yourself, maybe with a trip to the cinema?

Your four-point action plan

This four-point action plan helps you more easily master the hurdles in quitting smoking.

1. Delay

Your craving for a cigarette is sure to pass, until then: take slow, deep breaths – repeat five to ten times.

2. Avoid

Can you identify your high-risk environments? Try avoiding them for a while, for example by taking your breaks at work in a different location.

3. Pop out

Avoid difficult situations until you feel stronger. For example, switch rooms if the group of smokers on the balcony tests your willpower.

4. Distract

Consciously replace smoking with other activities that are fun, distracting and in no way compatible with smoking.



Everyone needs to pitch in

You, as a mother, are not the only one responsible in the situation. The moment you make the decision to stop smoking is precisely when it is time for your partner, family, good friends and colleagues to step up – their help and understanding will strengthen your determination to see this through. Naturally, the decision to stop smoking is a personal one. However, once there is a child involved, the situation becomes an entirely different one as it is now also a question of the child's well-being.

Good to know!

Tobacco smoke is dangerous – in every form

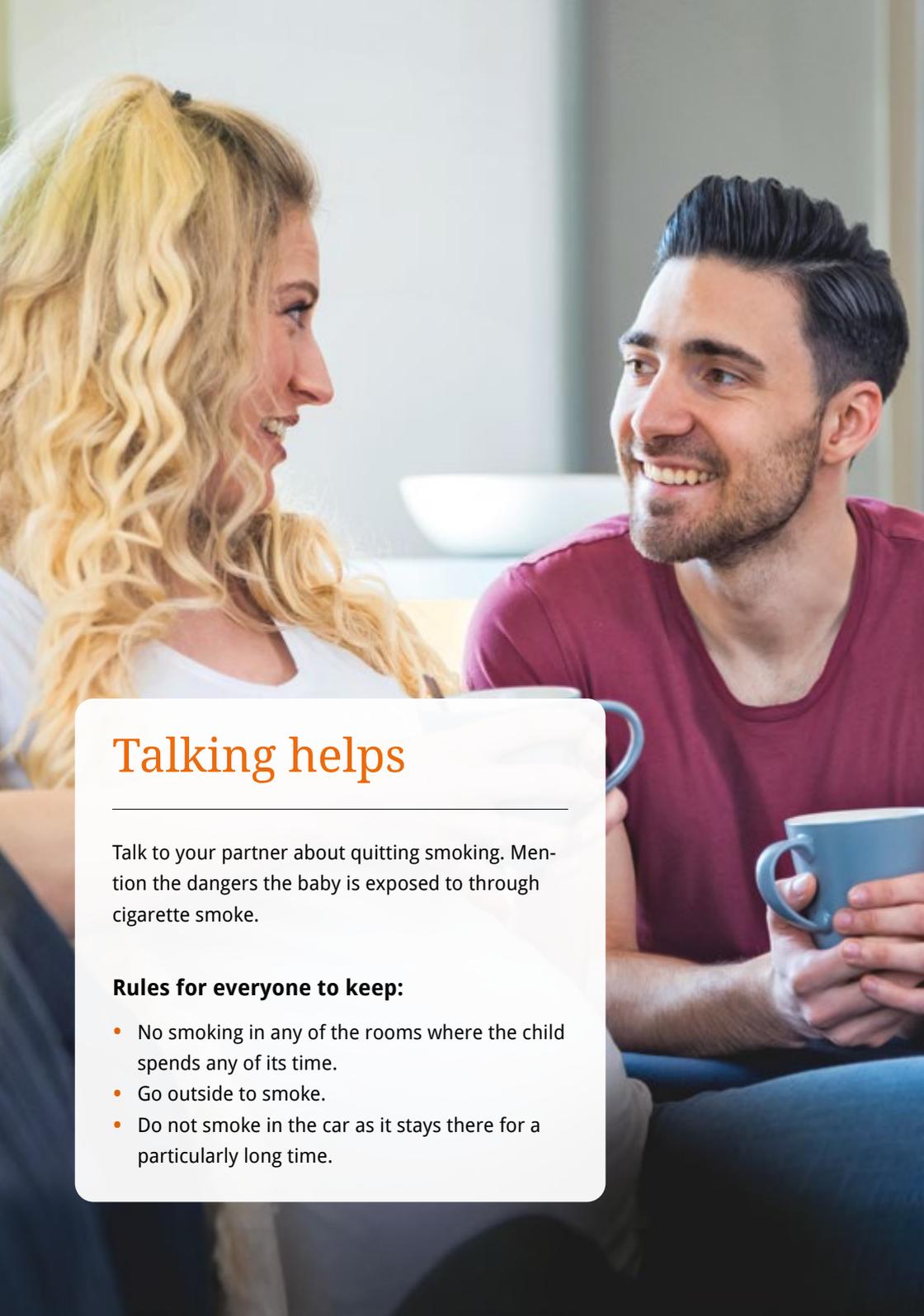
Passive, or second-hand, smoke is hazardous to you and your child. That is why you must always make sure to keep your home smoke-free. Even third-hand smoke poses a health risk: residual toxins can be found on wallpaper, furniture, curtains, carpets and other surfaces. They are then released into the indoor air and remain long after anyone has smoked in the room.

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Legal regulations for a smoke-free workplace.

The Workplaces Ordinance (Arbeitsstättenverordnung) protects all employees in Germany from the hazards of tobacco smoke. As an expectant mother in Germany, the Maternity Protection Act (Mutterschutzgesetz) also applies, ensuring that the employer must organize the workspace conditions of pregnant and breastfeeding women in such a way that they are adequately protected from any health hazards (Section 2 (1) and (5)). This includes, among other things, protection from tobacco smoke. It is therefore your right to insist that your workplace be completely smoke-free.

* Zum Teil wird anstatt von kaltem Rauch auch von Dritthandrauch gesprochen. Die Bezeichnung leitet sich vom englischen Wort „third-hand smoke“ ab (im Englischen ist „second-hand smoke“ die Bezeichnung für Passivrauch).



Talking helps

Talk to your partner about quitting smoking. Mention the dangers the baby is exposed to through cigarette smoke.

Rules for everyone to keep:

- No smoking in any of the rooms where the child spends any of its time.
- Go outside to smoke.
- Do not smoke in the car as it stays there for a particularly long time.

Successfully quitting smoking

Do you want to quit smoking? We are here to help you.
Select the appropriate option for you from
our free and quality-assured services.

Telephone counselling on withdrawal symptoms

Free service number ☎ **+49 (0) 800 8 31 31 31**

Consultation times: Monday to Thursday: 10am to 10pm; Friday to Sunday:
10am to 6pm

Online help at www.rauchfrei-info.de

- Exchange ideas on how to quit smoking in forums and chats
- Stop smoking programme with individual daily tips
- Motivation and help from our volunteers to a smoke-free life
- Quality-assured information on the topics of smoking and non-smoking
- Additional tips, tests and much more ...

Tip: The **IRIS online consultation** (www.iris-plattform.de) offers tailored support for getting through your pregnancy without drinking alcohol or smoking.

Order information materials via telephone or online

For example, the smoke-free starter pack which includes the "I'm ready to quit smoking!" brochure and other useful materials to help you successfully quit smoking. You can find this and other materials at:
www.rauchfrei-info.de/informieren.

"Smoke-free programme" group course

Information on courses, local providers and possibilities of reimbursement is available at www.rauchfrei-programm.de.

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