



Article

# Provision of E-Cigarettes for Smoking Cessation in Pregnancy: Perceptions and Experiences of Pregnant Women from Two UK Sites

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**Abstract:** Introduction: Smoking in pregnancy is associated with negative health outcomes for both mothers and babies; e-cigarettes, which contain nicotine without hazardous tobacco, may offer an additional smoking cessation strategy for pregnant women. Although e-cigarettes are being increasingly offered within services, there is limited understanding about whether e-cigarettes can improve smoking cessation support for pregnant individuals. This study aimed to explore service users' experiences of using e-cigarettes as a tool for smoking cessation during pregnancy. Methods: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 14 women who had accepted one of two pilots and were analysed using inductive reflexive thematic analysis. The findings from each site were integrated to develop qualitative insight. Results: Participants largely had positive perceptions of the free and easy-to-use e-cigarette, preferring it to nicotine replacement therapies. The desire to have a healthy pregnancy and baby and the inclusion of non-judgemental behavioural support facilitated motivation to quit. Many participants reduced or quit tobacco use, with positive social and health implications reported. However, numerous barriers to quitting were present and intentions about long-term quitting of combustible cigarettes and e-cigarettes were mixed and uncertain. Conclusions: Providing e-cigarettes within smoking cessation services was indicated to be a positive and effective strategy for pregnant women trying to quit tobacco. However, numerous barriers to quitting and staying quit remained, suggesting scope for further improvements to smoking cessation support for pregnant women.

**Keywords:** smoking cessation; e-cigarettes; pregnancy; qualitative

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## 1. Introduction

There are many recognised detrimental health effects associated with smoking tobacco during pregnancy, including preterm birth, foetal mortality, stillbirth, birth malformations (e.g., oral clefts), low birth weight, and sudden infant death syndrome [1]. Women who smoke during pregnancy may also experience negative moral judgements and stigma [2] and are more likely to have poorer mental wellbeing that can further impede smoking cessation [3]. In the United Kingdom (UK), 8.8% of women are currently smoking at the time of birth [4], with national targets to reduce this figure to 6% [5]. With around 600,000 live births in England and Wales in 2022 [6], there is an urgent need to improve uptake and engagement for smoking cessation programmes targeting pregnant women.

# Smoking For Two Cigarettes And Pregnancy

**Michael J. Rosenberg**



## **Smoking For Two Cigarettes And Pregnancy:**

Smoking for Two Peter A. Fried, Harry Oxorn, 1980 Presents all the facts about the harmful effects of smoking on the expectant mother and her baby      How Tobacco Smoke Causes Disease United States. Public Health Service. Office of the Surgeon General, 2010 This report considers the biological and behavioral mechanisms that may underlie the pathogenicity of tobacco smoke Many Surgeon General's reports have considered research findings on mechanisms in assessing the biological plausibility of associations observed in epidemiologic studies Mechanisms of disease are important because they may provide plausibility which is one of the guideline criteria for assessing evidence on causation This report specifically reviews the evidence on the potential mechanisms by which smoking causes diseases and considers whether a mechanism is likely to be operative in the production of human disease by tobacco smoke This evidence is relevant to understanding how smoking causes disease to identifying those who may be particularly susceptible and to assessing the potential risks of tobacco products      *Smoking and Health Bulletin*, 1979      **Bibliography on Smoking and Health**, 1979      *Smoking and Reproductive Health* Michael J. Rosenberg, 1987      *Bibliography on Smoking and Health*, 1986 Annual cumulation of Smoking and Health Bulletin 1988      *Smoking and Hospital Costs During Pregnancy and the First Year of Life* Charlotte Hebel (J.), 2004      *The Health Consequences of Smoking*, 1988      **Tobacco & Health** Richard G. Schlaadt, 1992      **American Journal of Mental Deficiency**, 1981 Includes the association's conference proceedings and addresses      **Canada's Mental Health**, 1980      Readings in Developmental Psychology Mary Louise Courage, Mary Courage, 1988      **Bulletin of the Menninger Clinic** Menninger Clinic, 1981      **China's Millions**, 1885      **The Journal of Nursing Care**, 1978      *Teratogen Update* John L. Sever, Robert L. Brent, 1986      *Interior*, 1918      A Smoking Gun Elizabeth M. Whelan, 1984      *Report of the Commission Appointed to Inquire Into the Decrease of the Native Population* Fiji. Commission Appointed to Inquire into the Decrease of the Native Population, 1895      **The Human Body** Diagram Group, 1980 More than two thousand illustrations accompany an informative yet nontechnical guide to the human body and its functions that serves as a practical owner's manual for those concerned with personal health and fitness

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## **Table of Contents Smoking For Two Cigarettes And Pregnancy**

1. Understanding the eBook Smoking For Two Cigarettes And Pregnancy
  - The Rise of Digital Reading Smoking For Two Cigarettes And Pregnancy
  - Advantages of eBooks Over Traditional Books
2. Identifying Smoking For Two Cigarettes And Pregnancy
  - Exploring Different Genres
  - Considering Fiction vs. Non-Fiction
  - Determining Your Reading Goals
3. Choosing the Right eBook Platform
  - Popular eBook Platforms
  - Features to Look for in an Smoking For Two Cigarettes And Pregnancy
  - User-Friendly Interface
4. Exploring eBook Recommendations from Smoking For Two Cigarettes And Pregnancy
  - Personalized Recommendations
  - Smoking For Two Cigarettes And Pregnancy User Reviews and Ratings

- Smoking For Two Cigarettes And Pregnancy and Bestseller Lists
- 5. Accessing Smoking For Two Cigarettes And Pregnancy Free and Paid eBooks
  - Smoking For Two Cigarettes And Pregnancy Public Domain eBooks
  - Smoking For Two Cigarettes And Pregnancy eBook Subscription Services
  - Smoking For Two Cigarettes And Pregnancy Budget-Friendly Options
- 6. Navigating Smoking For Two Cigarettes And Pregnancy eBook Formats
  - ePub, PDF, MOBI, and More
  - Smoking For Two Cigarettes And Pregnancy Compatibility with Devices
  - Smoking For Two Cigarettes And Pregnancy Enhanced eBook Features
- 7. Enhancing Your Reading Experience
  - Adjustable Fonts and Text Sizes of Smoking For Two Cigarettes And Pregnancy
  - Highlighting and Note-Taking Smoking For Two Cigarettes And Pregnancy
  - Interactive Elements Smoking For Two Cigarettes And Pregnancy
- 8. Staying Engaged with Smoking For Two Cigarettes And Pregnancy
  - Joining Online Reading Communities
  - Participating in Virtual Book Clubs
  - Following Authors and Publishers Smoking For Two Cigarettes And Pregnancy
- 9. Balancing eBooks and Physical Books Smoking For Two Cigarettes And Pregnancy
  - Benefits of a Digital Library
  - Creating a Diverse Reading Collection Smoking For Two Cigarettes And Pregnancy
- 10. Overcoming Reading Challenges
  - Dealing with Digital Eye Strain
  - Minimizing Distractions
  - Managing Screen Time
- 11. Cultivating a Reading Routine Smoking For Two Cigarettes And Pregnancy
  - Setting Reading Goals Smoking For Two Cigarettes And Pregnancy
  - Carving Out Dedicated Reading Time
- 12. Sourcing Reliable Information of Smoking For Two Cigarettes And Pregnancy
  - Fact-Checking eBook Content of Smoking For Two Cigarettes And Pregnancy
  - Distinguishing Credible Sources

13. Promoting Lifelong Learning
  - Utilizing eBooks for Skill Development
  - Exploring Educational eBooks
14. Embracing eBook Trends
  - Integration of Multimedia Elements
  - Interactive and Gamified eBooks

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