MS INFO CHANNEL

Guide with checklists

Love, Family and Parenthood with MS

For couples and parents: closeness, pregnancy, daily life and help

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Foreword: For the two of you and for your children

What this book can do, what it cannot do, and how to use it.

MS does not only change your body. It also touches the people around you. A relationship has to find a new balance. Closeness and sex sometimes need new paths. A wish for a child raises many questions. And once children are there, it is about energy, time and help in daily life.

This book collects what is backed by evidence. It explains in short sentences. It gives you questions and answers, checklists, worksheets and conversation aids for your doctor's appointment. Every number has a source. You find the sources at the back and through the number in square brackets, for example [1].

REMEMBER The good news first

MS is not a reason to give up love, family or children. According to the German guideline, pregnancy does not generally make MS worse [1]. What matters is planning, good agreements and help at the right time.

How the book is built

- **Chapters 1 and 2:** relationships, closeness and sexuality.
- **Chapters 3 and 4:** the wish for a child, pregnancy, birth and breastfeeding.
- **Chapter 5:** parenting with MS and talking with children.
- **Chapters 6 and 7:** household help, parent assistance, maternity protection and money (as it works in Germany).
- **Chapter 8:** counselling and help in a crisis.
- **Appendix:** conversation cards for appointments and a short glossary.

What this book is not

ATTENTION No advice for your individual case

The book replaces neither medical nor legal advice. It gives no doses and recommends no treatment for your individual case. Whether and how you change, stop or continue an MS medicine is something you decide only together with your neurologist. With pregnancy or a wish for a child, you also involve your gynaecologist.

INFO Written for readers worldwide, with a German focus on law

The medical parts apply wherever you live. The legal and health insurance parts describe **Germany**. We mark them clearly as Germany. We add general hints on what to ask where you live. We do not describe the rules of other countries, because we have not checked them. Legal statements are as of **4 November 2026**.

INFO How to tell where a statement comes from

- Number with [no.]: backed by the named source.
- **Experience-based:** advice from practice, not proven by a study. We always label it.
- **Invented example:** case examples are made up. They are meant to make situations easier to picture.
- **Shown only for other conditions:** we say clearly when findings do not apply to MS.

WHEN TO SEE A DOCTOR this applies to the whole book

- New or worsening symptoms that last longer than 24 hours: call your neurology practice.
- Sudden paralysis, sudden loss of vision or speech problems: call your local emergency number (112 in Germany).
- Bleeding, severe pain or fever in pregnancy: gynaecology or emergency department.
- Before you change or stop an MS medicine: always your neurologist first.

1 Relationships with MS

What studies show about separation and staying together, and how to start the conversation.

Can a relationship survive MS?

You may have heard: “Most relationships break up because of MS.” That is too sweeping. The studies show a mixed picture. We present two large ones.

Sweden: a higher risk only for men

A Swedish register study compared 3,998 people with MS with 15,992 people without MS. They were followed for ten years on average. For women with MS the divorce risk was not statistically raised. For men with MS it was 21 percent higher [6].

Denmark: nearly equal after five years, further apart after 24

In Denmark, five years after onset, 86 percent of people with MS and 89 percent of the comparison group were still in their relationship. After 24 years it was 33 percent against 53 percent. Among people whose MS began before age 36, men separated more often than women, and people without children more often than parents of children under seven [7].