

IN ENGLISH

THE FEDERATION OF
MOTHER AND CHILD HOMES
AND SHELTERS



Thinking of* you

DAMAGES CAUSED BY INTOXICANTS

DURING PREGNANCY



Dear mother-to-be!

Pregnancy means a great change in your life. Two are becoming three, and at first the baby is so helpless that the little one becomes the absolute centre of your attention. The change begins already during pregnancy although the mother's stomach is not yet very big. Changes start to take place in your mind and this is meaningful.

Change is a natural possibility for finding your own strengths and for making changes in your life if necessary. You will remember your own childhood experiences and your parents.

You will probably also think about the good things in your childhood that you wish to offer your own child and what you wish to do better. The need for change could relate to cigarettes, alcohol or drugs.

A little personality is growing in your womb

During pregnancy you may imagine what the baby will be like and how the baby is doing in the womb. You can learn to interpret the baby and to answer the baby's messages: interaction begins already before birth. The idea may sound odd at first but you may begin by listening to your baby.

Connect with your baby. Talk to the baby and stroke it in your womb. The mother's and father's thoughts about the baby are the foundation for building a relationship already during pregnancy. Besides a relationship with the baby you also begin to build your own motherhood or fatherhood in your mind.

In sufficient parenting both the baby and the parents feel well. You do not need to be perfect in taking care of your baby.

Uncertainty is human. We are all parents in our own way, with our own strengths and challenges. Your baby needs loving a parent who the baby can love back.

You certainly wish the best for your baby. During pregnancy you need to rethink your attitudes towards nutrition, sleep, physical exercise and intoxicants. What was OK earlier is not always so any more.

WHAT WOULD THE BABY WISH FOR?

IS THE BABY LIVELY OR CALM?

HOW DOES THE BABY REACT?

WHAT KIND OF A PARENT WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE?

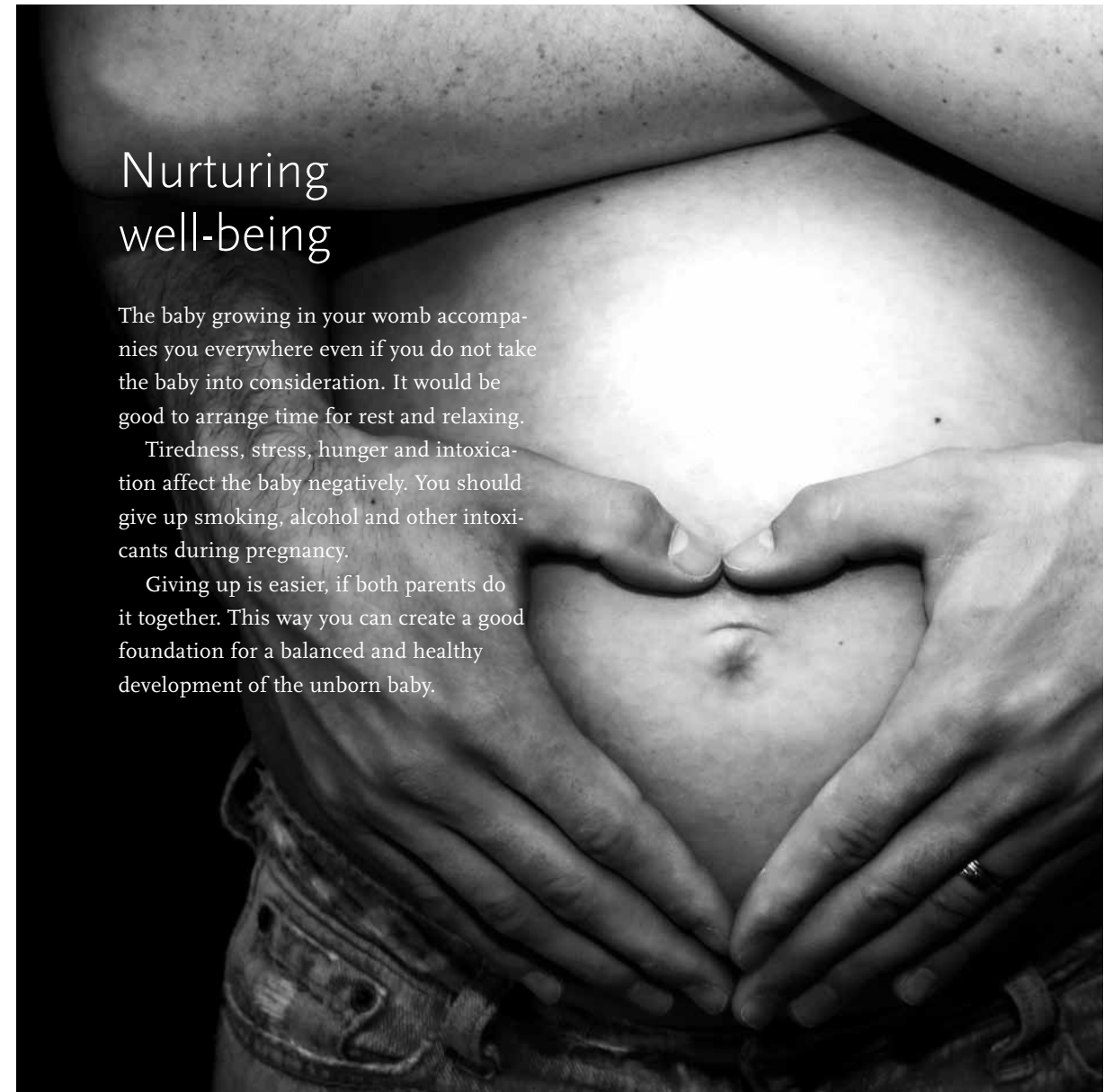
WHAT KIND OF FEELINGS DOES THE PREGNANCY INVOKE IN YOU?

Nurturing well-being

The baby growing in your womb accompanies you everywhere even if you do not take the baby into consideration. It would be good to arrange time for rest and relaxing.

Tiredness, stress, hunger and intoxication affect the baby negatively. You should give up smoking, alcohol and other intoxicants during pregnancy.

Giving up is easier, if both parents do it together. This way you can create a good foundation for a balanced and healthy development of the unborn baby.



Effects of intoxicants on the baby

NINA RAMSBY / CORILLA

INTOXICANTS PASS TO THE FOETUS THROUGH THE PLACENTA.

THE EFFECTS OF INTOXICANTS ON THE PREGNANCY

AND THE UNBORN BABY DEPEND ON THE SUBSTANCE AND QUANTITY.

CIGARETTES: Nicotine, carbon monoxide and other poisons pass directly into the foetus and cause lack of oxygen and growth disorders. Smoking also increases the risk of miscarriage and prematurity.

Smoking during pregnancy may affect the child's health and development, such as growth and concentration, also later on.

ALCOHOL: If the mother uses alcohol during pregnancy, the alcohol concentration in the blood of the foetus and the newborn baby is the same as that of the mother. Alcohol increases the risk of haemorrhage during pregnancy, and miscarriage. It exposes to placental dysfunction and premature detachment of the placenta. Alcohol retards foetal growth.

The use of alcohol at the beginning of pregnancy may cause anomalies for exam-

DRUG USE should be discussed with the doctor. Tranquillizers and sleep medication may cause foetal anomalies. Benzodiazepines are the most commonly abused

A smoking mother's baby is likely to have more respiratory infections and asthma.

The effects of passive smoking during pregnancy are the same as those of active smoking.

This is why it is particularly important that neither the mother nor the father smokes during pregnancy.

ple in the heart of the baby. Alcohol is also the most important single cause of mental retardation during pregnancy. FASD (Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders) describes the different degrees of damage caused by foetal exposure to alcohol.

Studies have not been able to establish any safe limit for alcohol consumption during pregnancy. It is recommended to completely avoid alcohol.

drugs. They cause retardation of foetal growth and jaundice, hypothermia, hypotension and respiratory depression of the newborn.

ILLCIT DRUGS: Also drugs pass the placenta to the foetus. Mothers who use drugs have more haemorrhages during pregnancy than normal. Detachment of the placenta, breaking the water and starting labour prematurely are more common.

CANNABIS: The use of cannabis during pregnancy may affect the development of the baby's brains. It slows the growth of the fetus and may cause malformations.

AMPHETAMINE: Amphetamine decreases appetite which results in malnutrition. Malnutrition of a pregnant woman also exposes the foetus to malnutrition and slows down foetal growth. Amphetamine exposes the foetus to heart defects, microcephaly and mental retardation. If the mother uses amphetamine throughout pregnancy, the newborn will suffer from withdrawal symptoms.

The newborn babies may have a low birth weight and they often suffer from withdrawal symptoms.

Intoxicants also affect the mother's physical condition, nutrition and susceptibility to infections (hepatitis, HIV).

OPIOIDS SUCH AS HEROIN, MORPHINE, CODEINE, METHADONE, TRAMADOL AND

BUPRENORPHIN: The use of opioids during pregnancy may disturb the development of the foetus or cause heart defects. Opioids cause long-lasting withdrawal symptoms in the newborn. Monitored replacement therapy for opioids is available in specialized treatment units.

COCAINE AND CRACK: The use of cocaine or crack during pregnancy may cause retardation of foetal growth and small size of the newborn, and placental haemorrhages. The risk for detachment of the placenta triples.

Every substance-free day works towards the healthy development of your baby

Your baby develops in the womb throughout pregnancy. Taking care of your health and well-being, and a substance-free life, support the healthy growth and development of your baby.

Stopping the use of alcohol, cigarettes, drugs and other substances that are harmful for your baby is the right decision at any stage of pregnancy. Every substance-free day will allow your baby to develop in peace.

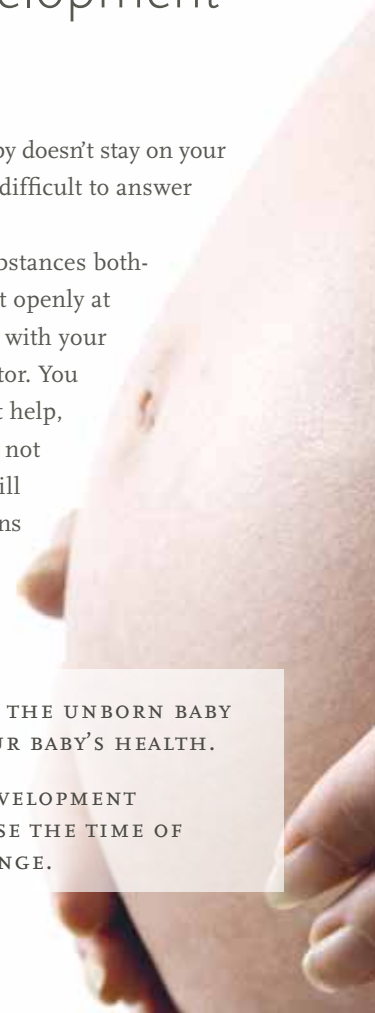
Your baby will need a safe adult also after birth. Intoxication will prevent you from interpreting your baby's messages correctly

and in time. The baby doesn't stay on your mind and it will be difficult to answer the baby's needs.

If your use of substances bothers you, talk about it openly at the maternity clinic with your health nurse or doctor. You have the right to get help, because stopping is not always easy. You will look for good solutions in your particular situation.

THE EFFECTS OF CIGARETTES, ALCOHOL AND DRUGS ON THE UNBORN BABY CAN BE SEVERE. THESE SUBSTANCES CAN DESTROY YOUR BABY'S HEALTH.

THE USE OF SUBSTANCES ALSO AFFECTS THE DEVELOPMENT OF PARENTHOOD. IT WOULD BE WORTHWHILE TO USE THE TIME OF PREGNANCY FOR ADAPTING TO THE CHANGE.



Every future parent, including you,
should think about:

What is my attitude
towards intoxicants?

HOW WERE INTOXICANTS USED IN MY CHILDHOOD FAMILY?

DO I WANT TO FOLLOW THE SAME PATTERN AS MY PARENTS

OR SHOULD I CHANGE SOMETHING?

HOW DOES PARENTING AFFECT MY USE OF INTOXICANTS?

HOW DOES MY USE OF INTOXICANTS AFFECT MY PARENTING?

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF A SUBSTANCE-FREE LIFE DURING PREGNANCY

TO THE UNBORN BABY?

What about myself?

SHOULD I CHANGE MY USE OF INTOXICANTS?

In what way?

DRUG PROBLEMS AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE, HELP FOR
PREGNANT MOTHERS AND FAMILIES WITH BABIES:

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– MOTHER AND CHILD HOMES

AND OUTPATIENT UNITS

THE FEDERATION OF MOTHER
AND CHILD HOMES AND SHELTERS



HELP IS AVAILABLE AT:

maternity policlinics, health centres, social services, A-clinics and national mother and child homes and outpatient services specialized in treating drug abuse.

Further information:

www.ensijaturvakotienliitto.fi

www.irtihuumeista.fi

www.lasinenlapsuus.fi

www.lastenseurassa.fi

www.paihdelinkki.fi

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