

BOOKLET 3

CARING FOR YOU AND YOUR BABY

Some women have a midwife, some have a doctor, and some have both. Ask your local doctor to explain your choices for pregnancy care. There are other things you can do for yourself and your baby. Try to **eat healthy food, exercise, and rest when you feel tired**. You can read more about caring for you and your baby in this booklet.



CARING FOR YOU AND YOUR BABY

**When you take good care of yourself
you are also taking good care of your baby**

**What you eat and drink affects you
and your baby**

**Do some gentle exercise and
get plenty of rest**

**It's OK to feel up and down during your
pregnancy - talk to your doctor about
how you are feeling**

**A support person can help you
throughout your pregnancy and birth**

It's hard to imagine anything that changes your life more than having a baby. There are changes in you, your body, your baby and your relationships. All this change can be stressful. **You need to take care of yourself!**

By taking care of yourself during pregnancy, you are also taking care of your unborn baby.

Your baby is a part of you.

What you eat, your baby eats.

What you drink, your baby drinks.

You are so close that even your feelings might affect your baby. **Isn't it amazing!**

In this booklet there are lots of ideas for taking special care of yourself.

There are ideas about:

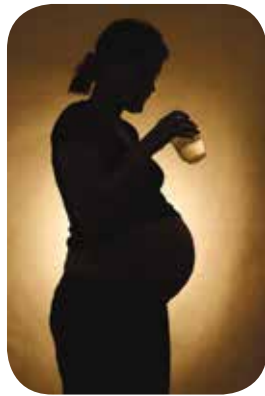
- Healthy eating
- Rest, exercise and sex
- Understanding your feelings
- Keeping safe
- People who can support you
- Handling pets
- Looking after your teeth
- Safety around the home



Healthy Eating

Everything that you eat and drink affects you and your baby. By eating healthy food, **you are helping your baby grow.**

And you need to drink lots of water! 8 glasses per day.



EAT MORE

- Fruit, vegetables and salads
- Wholegrain bread and cereal
- Milk, yogurt and hard cheese



EAT SOME

- Meat
- Chicken
- Fish



EAT LESS

- Sugary foods like pop and candy
- Fatty foods like fries and hamburgers




It might be important to add folate, vitamin C or iron to your diet (what you eat). Ask your doctor if you need any of these. **Ask why they are important, and how to add them to your diet.**

THINGS YOU CAN DO


- Tell your doctor if you're on a special diet
- Ask your doctor if you should take any vitamins

Write down some healthy meal ideas


Healthy breakfast




Healthy lunch



Healthy dinner



Healthy snacks



Rest, Exercise, Sex

It's important to get plenty of rest. It's normal to be tired when you are pregnant. Your body is using more energy as your baby is growing. Listen to your body. When your body says to rest – give in to it!

It's also good to do some exercise when you are pregnant. Gentle exercise like walking or swimming will help you feel good during your pregnancy.



Tick any exercises that you like to do

Walking

Swimming

Yoga

Other gentle exercise: _____

Are you worried about having sex?

For most women it's OK to have sex when you're pregnant. Don't be embarrassed to ask about having sex. Your doctor will be happy to answer all your questions.

This is a normal part of life. **Your partner might also want to ask some questions.**



THINGS YOU CAN DO

- Check with your doctor that you have a **healthy exercise routine**
- Try to do some **gentle exercise every day**
- Start and finish your exercise **slowly**. Your body needs to **warm up and cool down**
- **Drink plenty of water** before, during and after your exercise
- Wear **comfortable** clothes

STOP EXERCISING IF YOU...

- are hot and tired
- have **any pain** anywhere in your body
- get light headed or **dizzy**
- **don't feel well**

Understanding Your Feelings

Pregnancy is a time of strong feelings. Sometimes you can feel so happy that you could burst. Other times you can feel down or unhappy. Your feelings can change at any time during your pregnancy, or after your baby is born.

Sometimes we just don't know why we feel the way we do: we can feel down and wonder why. During pregnancy, there is a lot happening inside your body. This can make you feel sad.

Other times, we know why we feel down! Maybe someone has been mean to us. Or maybe we're worried about how we're going to cope.

Happy or sad, it's good to talk about our feelings.



Talk to your doctor if you:

- **feel down or blue** or feel like crying a lot of the time
- **feel very stressed** or panicky
- feel that **you can't cope**
- feel like you **want to run away**
- have **lost your appetite**
- **can't sleep** properly
- have **lost interest** in things you enjoy
- **want to hurt yourself or your baby**



For more than TWO WEEKS have you?

TICK YES OR NO	YES	NO
Felt sad, down or blue most of the time?		
Lost interest or pleasure in most of your usual activities?		
Felt stressed, tense or up-tight most of the time?		
Felt scared or worried all of the time?		

If you answered **yes** to any of these questions, talk to your midwife or doctor about how you are feeling.

*For more information about depression or anxiety,
visit www.cmha.ca*

How Do You Feel Today?



Circle the faces that show how you feel.



HAPPY



SAD



CONFUSED



SCARED



EXCITED



ANGRY

Keeping Safe

You have the right to feel safe. **It's not OK for anybody to:**

- **threaten** you
- **hit** you
- **make you feel scared**
- make you **do something you don't want to do**

Who do you trust? Think about the people you can tell if you don't feel safe

- My partner
- My friend
- My mother or father
- My sister or brother
- My doctor
- My nurse
- My Child and Family Health nurse
- My social worker
- The police (dial 911 in an emergency)



Where is a safe place? Think about places you can go if you don't feel safe

- **A friend's house**
- **Parent's or other family member's house**
- **The police station**
- **The hospital**



People Who Can Support You

It's good to have a support person.

A support person is someone who will support or help you during your pregnancy, labour, childbirth and after your baby is born. This may be your baby's father, a friend, a family member or a worker. There might be more than one person.

You can take your support person with you when you visit your doctor. You can also take your support person to pregnancy classes.

Your support person needs to learn about labour and childbirth too!



Your support person can help you ask questions about your pregnancy, and what is happening to you. And your support person can help you remember things that the midwife or doctor tells you.

It is important that your support person:

- will listen to you and your worries and will help you
- doesn't put you down, or give you advice you don't want

Who will support you during pregnancy and childbirth?

Write the name of your support person/s here:



Handling pets

Pets are a great part of family life. But pets can carry germs. To keep germs away that are bad for you and your baby, it's important to:

- always wash your hands after playing with pets
- let someone else clean the cat's litter tray!



Looking after your teeth

You might find that your gums bleed easily during pregnancy. It's important to clean your teeth at least twice a day. It's a good idea to have a check-up with your dentist during pregnancy. **Remember to tell your dentist that you are pregnant!**



Safety around the home

Think about areas around your home that might be dangerous. As you get bigger, you might become a bit clumsy! It's easy to slip and fall. Take care on stairs and slippery floors, like in the bathroom or kitchen.



Tick any questions that you would like to ask your midwife or doctor

Are there foods that I shouldn't eat?

How much tea, coffee or pop can I have?

Should I take vitamins?

How much exercise is safe?

Can I stay at work until my baby is born?

Who can I talk to when I am upset or sad?



CARING FOR YOU AND YOUR BABY

FIND A WORD FUN

V	E	G	E	T	A	B	L	E	S	M	C	T	M	E
D	U	H	J	I	G	W	D	R	T	N	U	S	I	B
H	A	R	D	C	H	E	E	S	E	V	I	S	L	R
F	U	M	L	U	L	E	C	G	M	A	E	T	K	I
T	N	I	N	F	T	A	B	D	C	M	L	U	E	Z
P	S	D	S	R	I	G	W	T	E	I	N	F	U	A
W	O	W	J	G	C	H	E	E	R	D	S	R	A	Q
O	N	I	R	C	U	L	E	S	E	W	J	G	U	R
E	A	F	L	X	Y	F	F	A	A	I	R	C	N	F
B	L	E	S	M	C	R	W	W	L	F	L	X	S	B
W	D	R	T	N	U	U	T	V	S	A	L	A	D	S
L	P	S	E	V	C	I	N	N	C	E	S	Y	T	H
Y	O	G	U	R	T	T	U	M	M	T	Z	E	S	F
V	S	R	T	M	A	L	P	O	S	Y	G	I	V	E
W	H	O	L	E	G	R	A	I	N	B	R	E	A	D

It's important to take good care of yourself when you are pregnant – **healthy eating is a good way to look after yourself and your baby!**

Try to find these **8 words** hidden in the puzzle above.

fruit

vegetables

salads

wholegrain bread

cereals

milk

yogurt

hard cheese

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



Healthy Start for Me and My Baby is one element of Healthy Start: A national capacity building strategy which aims to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for children whose parents have learning difficulties www.healthystart.net.au.

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www.sydney.edu.au/health-sciences/afdsrc



www.parentingrc.org.au

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www.fdsa.ualberta.ca