

The Radium 'Hen'

The greatest care is taken to avoid losing any of the element in the dressings and ward sweepings, and a sensitive electric instrument called a radium detector or 'hen', which clucks in the neighbourhood of the radium, is in general use. At the Manchester Christie Hospital all the hospital dressings are wheeled past the 'hen' as a routine. (Beechmount has not so far lost any radium at any time.) During treatment the surrounding skin can be protected and soothed by cod liver oil, or a zinc and castor oil paste, but the latter must contain very little zinc, as mineral substances (and iodine) cause intense irritation.

—From *The Nursing Times*, March 13th, 1937.

THE MOTHERCRAFT PAGE

Articles for this page will be most gratefully received by the Editor,
Miss Diana Hartley, S.R.N., S.C.M., M.T.S. Certificate

The Training of Infants and Toddlers

By M. MACASARE, *Student Health Visitor, Health Visitors' Institute, Bombay*

'In every work the beginning is the most important, especially in dealing with anything young or tender.'—*Socrates*.

The training of children helps in character formation. It should, therefore, commence at the beginning of life. First of all, it is important to train a child's body, since the training in physical habits passes gradually into character training and self-discipline.

When we are teaching young mothers about the care and management of children, emphasis should be laid upon *regularity*, that is, on doing the same thing at the same time daily; for example the intervals and hours for sleep and feeding. There are two reasons for this: (1) Physical, and (2) Moral.

Physical reasons. We teach mothers that infants should be fed at regular intervals, because it helps children's digestion. Children should be put to sleep at regular hours and should have a sufficient amount of sleep, since it is good for their growth.

Moral reasons. We know that if a baby is fed at regular intervals, he learns not to expect food at other times, and if he is made to sleep at the same time daily, he does so without a question.

Thus, he learns two habits which are bound to be helpful to him in later life. Early training consists chiefly in the formation of good habits. A baby should be trained up in regular ways. He should have regular hours for sleep, regular hours for feeding, regular hours for being out in the open and regular hours for bowel and bladder actions. He should also have regular hours for being thoroughly awake and disengaged, and at his parents' disposal for a little fun. Often we come across mothers who are at times found thoughtlessly to disturb babies sound asleep in their cradles, in their effort to put them to sleep in their arms as a token of their affection. This is not at all good for the babies for physical as well as moral reasons.

Of course, all do not possess the art of training children, though some mothers endeavour to train their children in regularity through the little teaching and experience they have had in life. Many, however, do not realise what it really means. Mothers should be made to understand that it is important to feed and clothe children in the best way possible, but that it is still more important to build up their character. By training them to form

their character they do two important things: (1) They build up in them strong and noble character and (2) they make the children fit to face life.

Now how should mothers train and educate the little minds and thus influence their character? Here are a few things a mother may well remember about training her children for character:—

1. A child should be interfered with as *little* as possible. Let Mother Nature be his guide in everything he tries to do.

A child has a great power of concentration. He will look at a thing for a long time and make a movement over and over again until he can control it. He should not be disturbed except for his regular hours of meals, sleep, etc. As he gets older, he should be taught to keep himself occupied. He will be much happier and give less trouble to his mother, if he is engaged in doing something useful. So often Indian mothers are found leaving half of their household duties and trying to do things for a child when he is wanting to do them for himself.

To help him to gain self-occupation is to help him to educate his mind and character.

2. A child should not be prevented from doing anything unless it is harmful to himself or others. This teaches him self-reliance.

3. A child should not be over-indulged, as it makes him soft and selfish.

4. If you nag at him and be harsh to him, you make him cowardly and deceitful.

Never shake children or box their ears or frighten them. Always be gentle but firm. Let your 'Yes' be yes, and 'No', no.

Let your child hear only kind words and pleasant things.

Moral education helps a child to learn *self-control*. The child who controls himself grows into a man who can face and conquer the difficulties of life.

If a child is never told to do unreasonable things, he will see that *obedience* to reasonable actions he is asked to do is right, and he will be more likely to refuse to do wrong when it comes his way.

One way of making a child unselfish is to encourage him to do things for yourself and for others.

A good mother knows how to teach her child discipline. She makes her child obey without a question; never goes back upon her word or argues a point.

From the very beginning of a child's life he should be taught to be (1) obedient, (2) self-controlled, (3) unselfish, (4) pure, and (5) truthful.

To cultivate and practise good habits, bodily, mentally and morally is to build up a great and good character, and the famous old saying bears this out:

'Sow an action, you reap a habit; sow a habit, you reap a character.'

Therefore, children should be taught to do right actions over and over again until the right actions become habits and the habits are built into a character.

Exercises During Pregnancy and the Puerperium

The need for a certain amount of physical exercise during pregnancy and the puerperium has long been recognised. Since modern fashions tend to slimness and 'sylph-like' figures, it is only natural that mothers desire a return to their pre-pregnancy figures as soon as possible.

Amongst further advantages may be mentioned the maintenance of free circulation (especially during the puerperium), thus decreasing the risk of thrombosis, and also assisting in the prevention of constipation.

In the past, pregnant women were encouraged to continue their household duties to term, scrubbing and washing being considered 'part of the training'! These occupations certainly exercised some of the muscles, but not those particularly needed at the time of delivery.

So often are patients told to 'perform exercises to strengthen their muscles during pregnancy and after,' but very rarely are they given detailed instructions too.

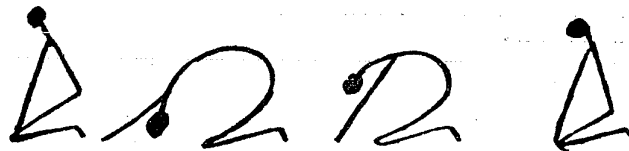
A few such simple exercises are here described, and by the aid of the accompanying diagrams it is hoped they will prove useful, and be passed on to the patients you will advise in the future.

Ante-Natal

1. A simple exercise consists of alternating contraction and relaxation of the abdominal wall, and contraction of the pelvic floor muscles by drawing the buttocks together when breathing out. May be performed when lying flat on the bed or floor, or standing upright.

2. When there is a tendency to stiffness, exercises for flexibility of the spine are given.

The patient is asked to kneel, sit back on her heels, flexing her trunk forwards until the head touches the knees, and the forearms are on the ground. She is then asked to 'unfold' as it were, so that each part of the spine is gradually straightened from the sacrum upwards, leaving the head until last. She 'breathes in' deeply in raising herself, and is directed to keep the abdominal wall flat throughout. The forearms are drawn backwards until they rest on the knees. This is useful in compressing the viscera and aids the portal circulation.



ANTE-NATAL. No. 2.

3. *Early and middle months only.*—Lie flat on back, bend both knees keeping the soles of the feet flat about 12 inches apart. Place both hands flat on the ground, and raise the hips from the ground about 4 inches (the body weight will rest on the head, shoulders and feet). Swing the body from side to side, keeping the shoulders flat, and tilting each hip upwards alternately. Repeat six times, lower the hips and relax for ten seconds. This constitutes one 'cycle.' Raise the hips again, and repeat six times. Do not hold the breath, and rest between each cycle.

This exercise contracts the extensors of the hips and the oblique abdominal muscles during rotation.



EARLY AND MIDDLE MONTHS. No. 3.

Puerperium

Encourage deep breathing and movements in bed from the beginning. The following exercises may commence on the third day if the delivery has been normal and no sutures,

1. Lie flat on back and lift the arms from the sides to the level of the shoulders, with inspiration and expiration. Repeat eight times.

2. Lie flat on the back with the hands on the hips, head to be slowly raised from the pillow, whilst the abdominal walls contract and the buttocks are drawn in. Repeat eight times.



PUERPERIUM. No. 2.

3. Lie flat with the hands resting lightly on the abdominal wall. The head and shoulders are then slowly 'rolled' forwards. The patient must not push the chin forwards, or the abdominal wall will 'bulge' instead of contracting, nor must any weight be rested on the elbows. The feet must be kept at right angles during the exercise, and the gluteal muscles strongly contracted.



PUERPERIUM. No. 3.

4. If the patient is exceptionally strong, the above exercise with the feet as well as the head being raised in the following manner.



PUERPERIUM. No. 4.

5. Hands clasped round the flexed knees, and endeavour to touch the knees with the chin.

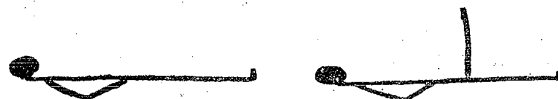
The nearer the head and knees approach, the greater the contraction of the abdominal muscles.



PUERPERIUM. No. 5.

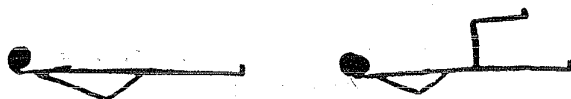
The above exercises, 2 to 5, are useful for strengthening the abdominal and pelvic floor muscles.

6. Lie flat, hands on hips, and elevate alternate legs, extended, above the head (count 1 to 4 up—1 to 4 down).



PUERPERIUM. No. 6.

7. As above, only flex at the knees, alternately (bicycling).



PUERPERIUM. No. 7.

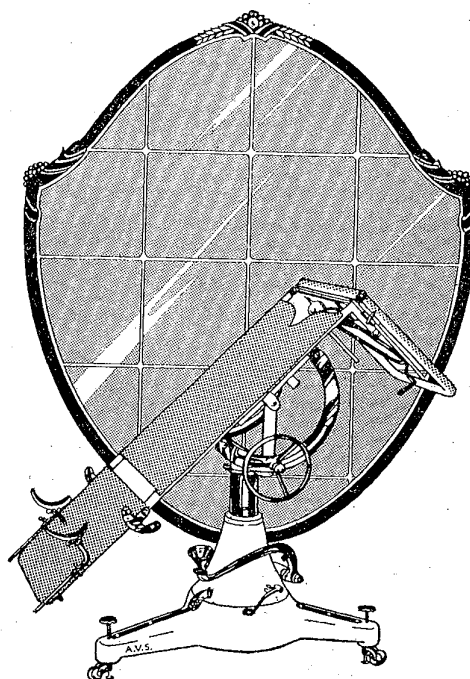
6 and 7 strengthen the muscles of the legs.

8. Lie prone for 15 minutes night and morning.

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This encourages the uterus to return to the normal position of ante-version and prevents the collection of lochia in the fornices.

9. *To assist the circulation in the breasts and increase the milk flow.*—Sit upright, inhale deeply with the arms outstretched at each side (count 1 to 8), then, as the air is expired, the arms are crossed on the chest and the head is bowed over them (count 1 to 8). By allowing the anterior chest wall to collapse, the air is completely expelled from the lungs.

Post-Natal.

To correct any stiffness of the lumbar region and any possibility of retroversion of the uterus.

1. Patient on 'all fours,' arches the back in a 'cat-like' movement, strongly contracting the abdominal muscles.



POST-NATAL. No. 1.

2. About the 8th day, when the patient is allowed out of bed, correct posture should be encouraged.

i. When standing.

(a) Feet together, weight on the outer borders of the sole and heel.

(b) Knees straight and buttocks drawn in.

(c) Abdomen drawn in.

(d) Head erect, chin pulled in and shoulders back.

ii. Stand erect with the back against the wall and the feet slightly forward. Bend the trunk forwards slowly and touch the toes with the fingers. Then slowly return to the original position until the spine touches the wall.

These exercises should be adopted to the ability and condition of the patient.

These Exercises have been asked for so often that we have had them reprinted from August, 1934. They can now be obtained in single sheets, price 1d. from the office of 'Nursing Notes,' 57, Lower Belgrave Street, S. W. 1.

—From *Nursing Notes*, March 1937.

QUIET HOUR

For some time our thoughts have been turning to the Coronation of our King and Emperor, and we all wish him and our Queen a long, prosperous and peaceful reign.

Almost 2,000 years ago, there walked on this earth, in Jerusalem, on the shores of Galilee, clad in humble garments and unrecognised,—a King. He performed miracles, healed the sick and even raised the dead. Yet people thought of Him as a Prophet. He even stooped to wash the feet of His followers. These men were defiled by sin but He was pure and sinless. Their feet were defiled by the dust of the street, yet He a King, stooped to taking a basin and towel and washing them!

Those of us who tend the sick and nurse the lepers are in a sense true followers of the 'Basin and Towel' religion. Shall we not own allegiance to the Founder of this religion? For He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords! He can cleanse away all sin and defilement from our souls, as we cleanse the bodies of our patients. He can give us power to overcome sin.

It is easy to become careless. Shall we not renew our allegiance and walk in His ways?

EDITH HENDERSON,