Relaxing and strengthening family care with Elementary Health Care
(Elementare Gesundheitspflege®)

Elementary Health Care (EHC) (Elementare Gesundheitspflege®) was developed in the mid-1980s by Erna Weerts, a health and nursing teacher, to maintain and promote health for all people. The original basic forms of care are used:

Meeting, perceiving, touching, warming, moving.

In the following text you will find easy-to-use forms of health care that you can provide to your child. The following intentions are achieved in particular with the applications: stimulation of individual self-regulatory talents, promotion of relaxation and well-being, relief from pain, strengthening of the immune system and the parent-child bond.



All applications are carried out using the shell-shaped hands as a resonance chamber to stimulate the body's own warmth and minimal movement. There are many different positions you can place your hands. It is always important that you focus on your child's needs and carry out the applications in a completely free manner.







Fig.1: Heat stimulation over the feet, ears and kidneys.

Figure 1 shows examples of simple forms of heat stimulation around the feet, on the ears and above the kidneys. Each position is held loosely with the clam-shaped hands for at least 3 minutes. Depending on the child's needs and wishes, all applications can be carried out with a light touch or with a distance of approx. 3-5 centimeters. Experience has shown that your child will experience a pleasant increase in warmth under the shell-shaped hands.

According to hormone researcher Prof. Kerstin Uvnäs-Moberg, a touch that is experienced as pleasant can increase the body's production of oxytocin. The increased release of this “happiness hormone” in turn has a positive influence on the parasympathetic nervous system, which is associated with relaxation, well-being, regeneration, pain relief and healing are associated [1].

According to the preventive medicine specialist Prof. Gerd Schnack, targeted external applications can have a calming influence on the entire body and soul and are related to what he calls the “great calm nerve” - "vagus nerve relationship" [2].

The haptics researcher Prof. Martin Grunwald writes about the effects of relaxation-promoting touch, carried out by other people: "Measurable changes can also be seen at the level of immunological markers that can be detected in the blood. Numerous studies have been able to prove that the immune system improves after intensive touch stimuli are stabilized and anti-inflammatory processes are accelerated [3]."

Figure 2 shows heat stimulation on the sides of the shoulders, over the larynx in combination with the occiput, and over the eyes. From an appropriate age, your child can also place their own hands in a shell shape on top of or next to each other on different parts of the body, e.g. on the sides of the hips, in the groin, on the stomach or the breastbone. Of course, you can also be in a different position relative to your child than shown in the photos. It is generally recommended to cover the child with a light blanket. This is missing from the photos only for better visibility of the applications.



Fig.2: Shoulder stimulation, larynx-occipital stimulation, eye stimulation

The pioneer in the development of nursing science in Germany, Prof. Ruth Schröck, has accompanied and promoted the EHC approach from the beginning. She specifically recommends these regulatory applications for self-care [4].

[1] Uvnäs-Moberg, K. (2016). In U. Streit & F. Jansen (Hrsg.), Oxytocin, das Hormon der Nähe. Gesundheit – Wohlbefinden – Beziehung (S. 50-55). Berlin/ Heidelberg: Springer Spektrum.

[2] Schnack, G. (2016). Der Große Ruhe-Nerv (S. 54-59). Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder.

[3] Grunwald, M. (2017). Homo Hapticus. Warum wir ohne Tastsinn nicht leben können (S. 159). München: Droemer.

[4] Schröck, R. (2016). Geleitwort. In: Erna Weerts (2. Aufl. 2017): Dynamisierende Selbstregulation (S.16f). Nidda: hpsmedia.