



Baby Massage with Sarah

activity sheet

Baby massage is an important form of communication between you and your baby. It allows for contact between the parent/ carer and baby, which assists in emotional pathways in the brain to form. **Massage also :**

1. Enhances bonding, attachment, emotions and mood by increasing dopamine levels
2. Reduces stress hormones by relaxing muscles in you and bub
3. Promotes sleep
4. Reduces crying and relief of discomfort associated with teething, wind and colic.

Tips before starting your massage.

1. Ensure a warm environment. You can use a blanket to cover parts not being massaged
2. Avoid bright lights so you don't overstimulate
3. Ensure you have warm, clean hands
4. Ensure you are relaxed and calm. Deep breathing, soft voice and music can assist.

Best time for massage

1. Ensure the room is warm and when bub is quiet and alert
2. Try a massage after a nap and when your baby isn't hungry
3. Not before a bath as it can make them slippery in the water and the bath will wash off the soothing, nourishing oil
4. With young babies it is best not to do after a bath as it can over stimulate. When your baby is a little older it can become part of your wind-down for bed routine.

Where to massage: Listen to our video whilst on the floor where bub cannot roll or fall. Never massage on a change table or bench. Remember eye contact is key.



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NOTE: There are baby massage courses available with certified massage instructors. They are a wonderful way to learn appropriate stroke techniques, but in the meantime, don't be afraid to touch your baby. It doesn't have to be complicated and you do not have to be an expert.

Tips for your baby massage

Always ask for permission – start of association with healthy touch.

Helps parents also learn baby's cues. Keep watch throughout the massage. If they show "no" signs such as clenched fists, grimacing, breaking eye contact, sneezing or blotchy red skin, then slow down or have a break or stop and try again another time.

Always keep one hand in contact with baby to help with the energy flow and let baby know that you are still there.

Ensure your bub is healthy – do not massage if they seem unwell or not themselves.

Talk, sign and hum to your baby during your massage.

Start low – legs are a great place to start as bub can see you through the massage and often less sensitive and intrusive to start with than other body parts. Build up to the back as they are on their tummy for that and they cannot see you.

KEEP IT SHORT – remember their awake time is so short, so most activities with young bubs are short and sweet. Oh and enjoy it. It is a beautiful time for both you and your baby.

Massage Oil

Cold pressed, organic vegetable oil such as apricot kernel, sunflower oil or sweet almond oil. Always perform a patch test first on the leg at least 20 mins prior to observe if bub has any reaction.

If an allergic reaction occurs wash with warm soapy water The International Association of Infant Massage recommends fragrance free oils as other can irritate or overstimulate. It is also best that they are subtle and natural such as essential oils, not artificial. The product should not interfere with your baby smelling you. Avoid mineral oils also as they have not been proven to be safe for infants.