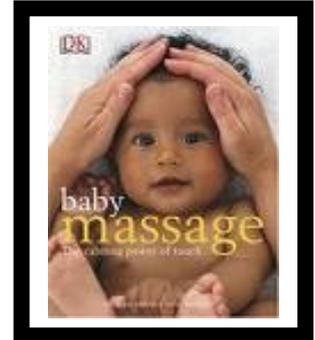


**Baby or Infant massage** has been enjoyed by many cultures for centuries, and research has shown it to have many benefits.

### ***Benefits for Your Baby***

- Helps your baby relax
- Stimulates circulation, digestion and neurological development
- Promotes restful sleep
- Improves your baby's immune system
- Stimulates your baby's developing nervous system
- Helps relieve pain of colic, gas, illness and teething
- Promotes healthy weight gain
- Enhances sensory awareness
- Stimulates growth-promoting hormones
- Provides baby with much-loved touch and connection
- Increases bonding and attachment between baby and parent
- Provides premature and special-needs babies with immense physiological benefits



### ***Benefits for Parents***

- Builds your confidence in baby handling
- Enables you to become more competent in reading your baby's cues
- Gives you a special, focused time with your baby
- Deepens the bond between you and your baby
- Provides you with a tool for calming and settling your baby
- Gives parents a loving way to introduce a sibling to a new baby
- Allows you to enjoy the feel of your baby's miraculous little body

Infant massage is made up several different strokes that are gentle, long, slow and rhythmic with just enough pressure to be comfortable and stimulating. A massage is a wonderful way to end a bathing session, begin or end the bedtime ritual, or start the day.

### ***General Tips:***

- \*Always massage baby's tummy from baby's right to left.
- \*Follow baby's signals about when to stop.
- \*Make sure your baby isn't too hungry (or too full).
- \*If your baby is colicky, choose the time just before crying usually begins.
- \*Daily massage is usually 5-10 min.
- \*Some babies may go off massage. That's ok.



### **Important Points!**

- \*Baby heats up and cools down quickly, so warm the room(23.9°C without any drafts) as necessary keeping the heater directly away from baby.
- \*Baby is very slippery when with massage oil, so wrap her when needing to move her.

**Getting Started** Use a blanket or towel, and massage oil in a non-breakable container. (Test the oil on a small spot of your baby's skin and wait a day to be sure no irritation appears.) Start when your baby is in a quiet yet alert state -- not immediately after a feeding or when she's sleepy. Sit on the floor with the soles of your feet together, forming a diamond shape with your legs. Drape the blanket over your feet and between your knees.



**Warm up:** shake your hands vigoursly to loosen them up. If it's your thing you may want to envision energy flowing through your body to your hands.

**Please ask your baby's permission.** This may feel a little bit silly, but it's actually a standard recommendation. Remember that massage is really quite a personal thing. Don't take it for granted that your child will want a massage? This sends a message from a young age that your baby's body belongs to her.

Undress your baby as sensibly possible, preferably down to her diaper and place her on the blanket, cradling her head on your feet. Start with a gentle "hello" stroke from baby's head to her toes. If baby stiffens, cries, or becomes irritable, move to another body part or simply end the massage for the day. If she responds well, start gently massaging her body section by section.



### Head and Face

1. Cradling your baby's head in both hands, massage the scalp with your fingertips, as if you're shampooing. (Avoid the fontanel, the soft spot on top of baby's head.)
2. Massage her ears between your thumb and index finger.
3. Trace a heart shape on your baby's face, bringing your hands together at the chin.

4. Place your thumbs between your baby's eyebrows, and stroke out.
5. Again with your thumbs, stroke gently out over baby's closed eyelids.
6. Stroke from the bridge of the nose out over the cheeks.
7. Using your fingertips, massage the jaw in small circles.



### Chest

1. Place both hands on your baby's chest and stroke outward from her sternum to her shoulders.
2. Beginning at her sternum, trace a heart shape bringing both hands up to her shoulders, then down and back together.
3. In a crisscross pattern, stroke diagonally from one side of your baby's hip, up and over the opposite shoulder, and back down to her hip.

### Tummy

1. Hold your hand so your pinky's edge can move like a paddle across your baby's belly. Starting at the base of the rib cage, stroke down with one hand, then the other, in a paddle-wheel-like motion.
2. Massage her abdomen with your fingertips in a circular, clockwise motion. Note: Avoid massaging tummy if the cord hasn't completely healed.
3. Do the "I Love U" stroke: Trace the letter I down your baby's left side. Then trace an inverted L, stroking across the belly along the base of her ribs from her right side to her left and down. Trace an inverted U, stroking from low on the baby's right side, up and around the navel, and down the left side.

### Arms and Legs

1. Hold her wrist/ankle with one hand and hold your other hand in a C-shape around baby's upper arm/leg; stroke from her shoulder/hip down to her wrist.
2. With each hand grasping her arm/leg, one right above the other, stroke down from shoulder/hip to wrist/ankle with both hands rotating in opposite directions, as if you were gently wringing a towel.
3. Massage her wrist/ankle by moving your fingers in small circles.
4. Massage her palm/foot, moving thumb over thumb from heel of her hand/foot to her fingers/toes.
5. Stroke down top of hand/foot from wrist/ankle to fingertips/toes.



**Gently** squeeze and pull each finger/toe.



### Back

1. Place baby on tummy horizontally in front of you, or lay her across your outstretched legs. Keep her hands in front of her, not at her sides.
2. With both of your hands on baby's back, move each hand up and down from the base of the neck to her buttocks.
3. Using your fingertips, massage in small circles down one side of baby's spine and up the other. Avoid pressing on her spine directly.

4. Massage her shoulders with small circular motions.
5. Massage her buttocks with big circular motions.
6. Holding your fingers like a rake, stroke down her back.

**Finish** the massage by holding baby's feet for a few moments saying thank you, then smooth down the aura around baby.