

Infant Massage



Instructor:

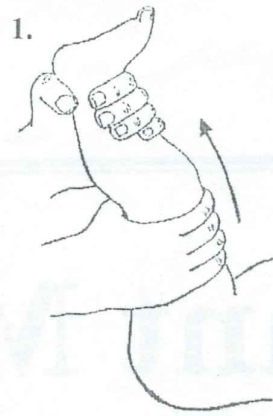
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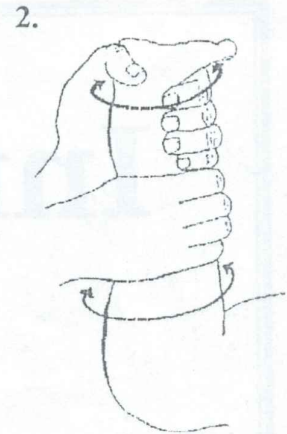
International Association of Infant Massage

Legs & Feet

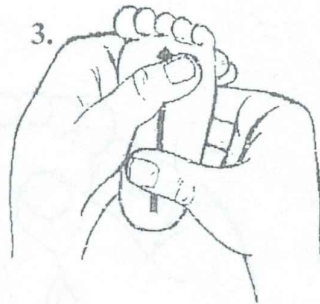
1. Indian milking



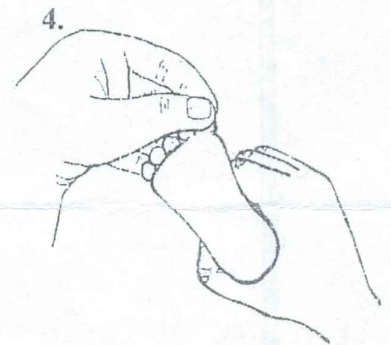
2. Hug and Glide
(Squeeze and twist)



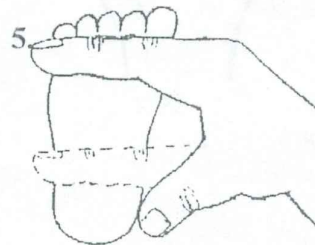
3. Thumb over thumb



4. Toe squeeze



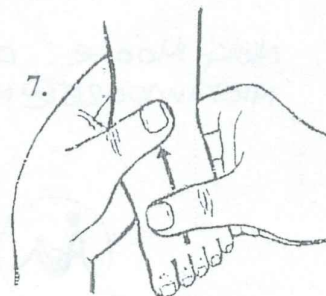
5. Under toes and
ball of foot



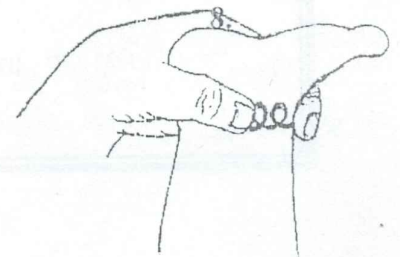
6. Thumb press



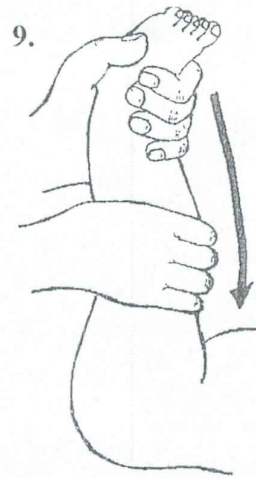
7. Top of foot



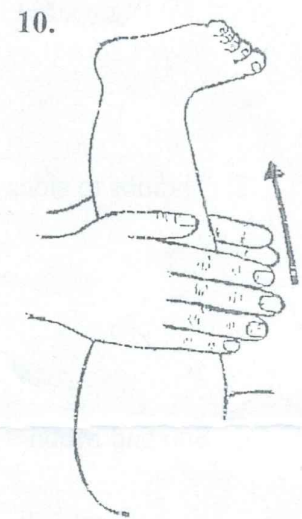
8. Circles around ankle



9. Swedish milking



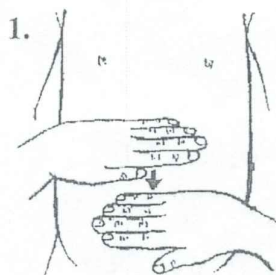
10. Rolling



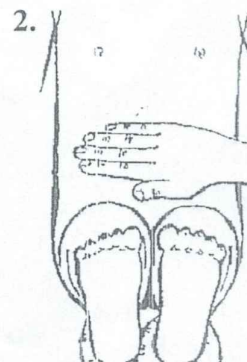
Bottom relaxer

Stomach

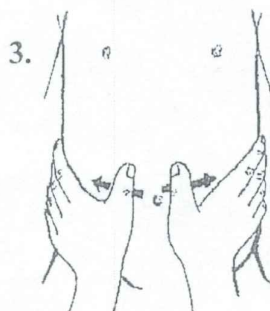
1. Water wheel



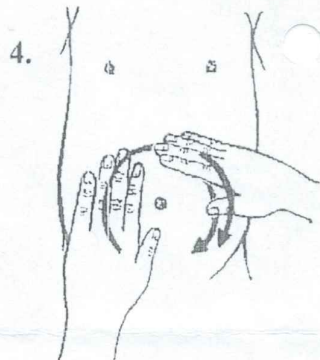
2. Lift legs – water wheel



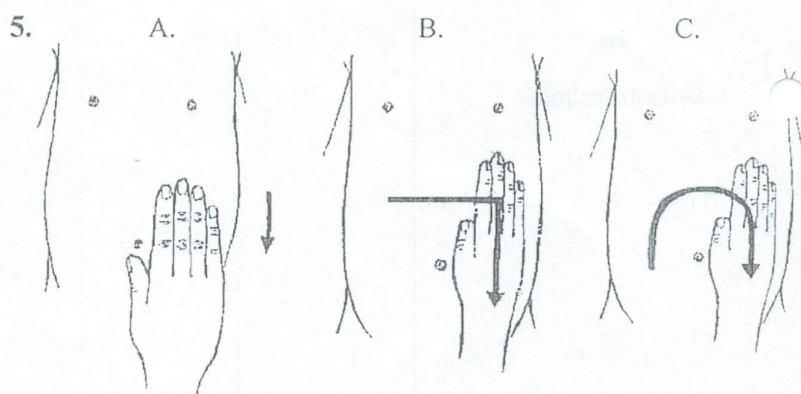
3. Thumbs to sides



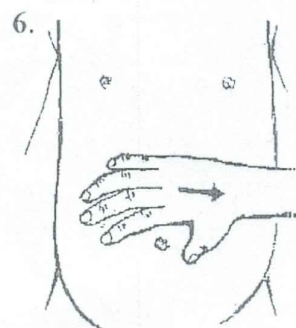
4. Sun and Moon



5-a. I
5-b. Love
5-c. You



6. Walking



Chest

1. Open book

1.

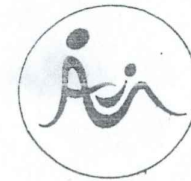


2. Butterfly

2.



INFANT MASSAGE COURSE



PARENTS' GUIDE

Communicating Love Through Touch

By
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INTRODUCTION

Skin sensitivity is already present in an eight-week-old embryo. In the uterus, the fetus is massaged, as it were, by the movement of amniotic fluid and later, as it grows, by the wall of the uterus. The process of birth is a very important massage for the baby. Touch is the sense which is the furthest developed and is the primary form of communication between a parent and a newborn baby. A mother will instinctively touch her newborn to get to know him better, and this forms a very important part of bonding.

Vimala Schneider McClure developed a simple but powerful Infant Massage routine, taught to parents by Certified Infant Massage Instructors of the International Association for Infant Massage (IAIM). In the early 70's she worked in a small orphanage in India. In the streets of India, she saw a young mother sitting in the dirt where she lived by the road. This mother had no material wealth, but she sat with her baby across her knees, lovingly massaging him and singing to him. Vimala says, "This mother could offer her baby security and love, a gift that would help to make him a compassionate human being." (Infant Massage, p. xvii)

She took this experience home with her to the USA and developed a massage routine when her own children were born, combining four types of therapy: Indian massage, Swedish massage, yoga and reflexology. She realized that when she massaged her first baby, he appeared to be relaxed and happy. When she stopped massaging him for two weeks, the change was noticeable. She taught her techniques to thousands of mothers, trained instructors and today mothers in 35 countries all over the world are massaging their baby's according to Vimala's routine.

WHY MASSAGE YOUR BABY?

Mothers all over the world know that their babies need to be held, rocked, carried and fondled. Cross-cultural studies have shown that in societies where infants are held, massaged, rocked, breast-fed and carried, adults are more cooperative and compassionate and less aggressive and violent. For infants, massage is much more than a luxurious experience or a type of physical therapy. It is a tool for maintaining a child's health and well-being on many levels. Parents feel secure in their ability to do something positive for and receive positive response from their baby.

Research has shown that touch is as important as food, for humans and animals. Harry Harlow carried out his famous monkey experiments where infant monkeys were given a choice between a wire mother with food and a furry mother without food. They preferred the furry mother without food.

Studies with premature babies showed that, when being massaged daily, babies gained 47% more weight on average. They also went home six days earlier.

For more studies and information on the benefits of touch, read Ashley Montagu's *Touching*.

THE BENEFITS OF INFANT MASSAGE

1. Relaxation

The ability to relax is a useful skill and the earlier a child learns it, the easier it will become. Stress is a natural part of an infant's life. Generally today, odours, sounds and sights overstimulate all infants. The pleasant touch of a parent's hands, voice and smile are relaxing and relieve the discomfort of caused by all these sensations.

A relaxed baby is usually calmer, goes to sleep more easily and generally sleeps better. This in turn empowers and relaxes the parent. A baby who is massaged also has an increased tolerance for stimulation.

2. Stimulation of All Systems

Baby massage and touch influence all the body's systems in a positive way:

- **Nervous System:** The nervous system of a newborn baby is still immature. Massage promotes the myelination of nerves. During massage four of the five senses are stimulated: touch, smell, hearing and sight. Massage also stimulates the activity of the vagus nerve (one of the twelve cranial nerves) and this leads to higher levels of hormones such as insulin, which promotes food absorption. Babies' growth is promoted in this way. Another effect of massage is the release of serotonin, a neurotransmitter. (When a shortage of serotonin occurs, a person becomes depressed). Endorphin, the body's natural painkiller, is also released, which relieves pain and causes a relaxed and drowsy feeling.
- **Immune System:** When a person is under stress, the levels of stress hormones, such as cortisol, rise. Cortisol destroys the body's natural killer cells and even attacks the organs. Massage lowers anxiety and the cortisol levels. Therefore, the body becomes less vulnerable to disease.
- **Digestive System:** Massage increases peristalsis, promotes digestion, relief of colic, wind, constipation and promotes elimination of waste products.
- **Circulatory System:** Massage has a direct influence on blood and lymph circulation. Oxygen and nutrient supplies are increased, and waste products such as carbon dioxide are removed more effectively. Better lymph circulation also strengthens the immune system. Optimal muscle health is obtained, healing is accelerated and skin texture is improved.
- **Endocrine System:** Stress hormones are balanced by touch and growth hormones are increased. Relaxing and calming hormones are released, which promote deeper sleep.
- **Respiratory System:** Massage helps a baby to open his chest and deep breathing is promoted. The stroking also helps suggest more rhythmic breathing. Deep breathing helps promote relaxation.

3. Relief of Various Physical and Emotional Problems

Infant massage may be helpful for colic, teething, sleeping problems and constipation. Emotional relief is also evident during massage.

4. General Development

Massage improves your baby's body image, suppleness and increases the quiet-alert state.

5. Interaction and Bonding

Infant massage promotes a nurturing relationship and helps the baby to experience positive touch. It is a way of interacting with your children, not only when they are babies, but throughout their lives. It lays the foundation for communication, creating space for talking and sharing their problems and joys with you.

6. Benefits for the Parent

The parent feels more confident in the care and handling of the baby. By increasing the parent's oxytocin and prolactin levels, infant massage strengthens parenting instincts and promotes caring, loving behaviour. Massage provides the parent with a sense of independence and empowerment. Massaging your baby frequently increases your awareness and understanding of your baby's cues, helping you to understand his or her body language.

TOUCH RELAXATION TECHNIQUE

This technique fits in with the massage routine, but can be used at any time. It works in three steps:

- * Take your baby's leg, for example, gently in your hands. Feel a heavy relaxation in your hands.
- * Gently bounce the leg, while saying in a soft voice "Relax." Use the same tone of voice each time.
- * As soon as you feel relaxation, give positive feedback saying: "Wonderful! You relaxed your leg!". Offer a smile and a kiss.

Remember. It is just as important for the mother to be relaxed!

GENERAL MASSAGE PRINCIPLES

	MOVEMENT	RESULT
PRESSURE	Deep pressure	Calming
	Feather light stroking	Stimulating
DIRECTION	With the hairline	Calming
	Against hairline	Stimulating
SPEED	Slow, rhythmic	Calming
	Fast, a-rhythmic	Stimulating

- * For a newborn baby (0-1 month) go slowly. Respect his need to keep his body curled up or covered.
- * Use mostly long, slow, rhythmic movements.
- * Baby massage is different from massage for adults. It is interactive: parent and babies communicate with and react to each other.
- * Work symmetrically so that your baby's body feels balanced and complete.
- * Avoid feathering strokes.

GETTING READY FOR MASSAGE

WHEN?

The best time to massage your baby depends on the baby. Each baby is different, but each baby has a time during the day when he is in a quiet alert state. In other words, he is not sleeping and he is not crying. The body and face are relatively inactive, the face is relaxed, and eyes are open, bright and observant.

If your baby has a difficult time every day (like the well-known 'grave yard shift' between 5 and 9 pm), massage him one or more hour before that time.

CONDITIONS IN THE ROOM

TEMPERATURE: The room should be warm enough, especially during the first months when your baby cannot regulate his own body temperature.



LIGHT: Be careful of any light that shines directly in your baby's eyes. Try to use soft, pleasant lighting. Remember that your baby is lying on his back and stares directly at the ceiling.



NOISE: Avoid TV, radio and telephone. This is your special, focused time with your baby. Soft, gentle music can enhance the relaxed atmosphere, but lively music can overstimulate your baby.



POSITIONING: You can sit anywhere, as long as you and your baby are comfortable. It is important, however, to position your baby so that you can make and maintain eye contact.



MASSAGE OILS: The best oil to use is a cold-pressed vegetable oil, such as Sweet Almond Oil or Apricot Kernel Oil. Grapeseed oil is also ideal, because it is hypo-allergenic, thin and penetrates quickly.



Mineral oils, when applied to the hands of the baby, may be ingested and end up in the stomach, where it inhibits the absorption of food. It also dries the skin and clogs the pores. When aromatic oil is used, it may affect the mother's own personal odours and this might be confusing to the baby.

WHAT ABOUT CRYING?

If you want to use massage to calm a crying baby:

Hold the baby in your arms while massaging, or let him lie upright against your shoulder, so that you can stroke his back while securing him well with the other hand. If the baby is very upset, keep his clothes on at first.

- * You can breastfeed your baby while massaging his body.
- * Start slowly and gently and do touch relaxation.
- * If the baby keeps on crying, rather leave the massage until a later time. It is important to listen with respect to your baby. Never force him.
- * Regular massage helps you to listen more intuitively to your baby's cries, because you get to know his body language and non-verbal messages better.

If your baby cries during massage:

- 2a. Breathe deeply and relax.
- 2a. Shorten the massage or wait until the baby feels better.
- 2a. Make eye contact if possible, if not, place your hands on his body and let your love flow through your hands to your baby.
- 2a. Feed your baby if he is hungry.
- 2a. Try massaging another part of his body, or try using more or less pressure.
- 2a. Hold your baby and welcome the crying by saying, "Yes, I know. Mummy is listening, tell me all about it."

MASSAGE TECHNIQUES

At the beginning, when you are learning and the baby is still tiny, work softly and gently. As baby grows stronger, your touch can become firmer. A firm touch communicates your strength, love and confidence. All strokes should be long, slow and rhythmic.

To Begin

- Make yourself comfortable, sit quietly for a few minutes, feel your body relax from head to toes. Take three deep breaths. Feel all traces of tension and anxiety leave your body.
- Remove your baby's clothes.
- Ask your baby's permission to begin. Pour a small amount of oil in you hands, and rub your hands together, so that the baby will know that you are about to start the massage. Then ask, "May I massage you now?"

Remember: slow rhythm, improvise and enjoy.

THE LEGS

1. INDIAN MILKING

Benefit

Milk from the hip to the foot, one hand following the other. The outside hand should include the hip.
Brings blood to feet and warms feet, relieves tension.

2. SQUEEZE & TWIST

Benefit

Place hands above each other, and turn them in opposite directions, squeezing gently, from the hip to the foot. Go lightly over the knee.
Excellent for growing pains.

3. THUMB OVER THUMB

Benefit

Stroke the bottom of the foot from heel to toe with your thumbs, one after the other
Stimulates nerve endings in the foot.

4. TOES

Roll each toe between your thumb and fingers.

5. PULL BACK

Pull back gently on the balls of the foot, pressing just below the toes and again in the middle of the foot, with your whole finger.

6. PRESS WITH THUMBS

Press with thumbs all over the bottom of the foot in any direction.

7. TOP OF FOOT

Benefit

Using your thumbs, stroke from the top of the foot toward the ankle.
Increases circulation.

8. SMALL CIRCLES

Benefit

Make small circles around the ankles, either with your thumbs or fingers.
Good for blood circulation, relaxation, strengthens the ankles.

9. SWEDISH MILKING

Benefit

One hand holds baby's ankle, while the other hand slides firmly from the ankle to the hip. The outside hand should again include the hip. Switch hands and repeat.
Brings blood back to the heart and lungs to be re-oxygenated.

10. ROLLING

Benefit

Roll the leg between your hands from the knee to the ankle.
Removes any tension that might be left in the leg.

11. STROKE WHOLE LEG

Benefit

Stroke from hip to foot in a long, firm stroke
Completes the leg massage, creates body awareness.

REPEAT ALL TECHNIQUES ON OTHER LEG

THE STOMACH

Keep in mind that a tummy massage may be unfamiliar to your baby at first. Start slowly and gently.

1. WATERWHEEL

Benefit

Make paddling strokes on baby's tummy, with flat hands, towards you, as if you are scooping sand.
Colic, wind

2. WATERWHEEL - LEGS UP

Benefit

With one hand, firmly hold both legs up, while repeating the waterwheel with the other hand.
Colic, wind

3. THUMBS TO SIDES

Benefit

Starting at baby's navel, push with flat thumbs to the sides, just beneath the ribline.
Wakes up peristalsis, helps release wind bubbles.

4. SUN & MOON

Benefit

ALWAYS CLOCKWISE! The left hand makes a continuous circle in a clockwise direction around the navel (sun), while the right hand moves above the left hand from 9 o'clock to 5 o'clock in a clockwise direction (moon).
Colic, wind, constipation.

5. I LOVE YOU

I

I: Make an 'I' shaped stroke with your right hand on baby's left-hand side (your right). From under the rib-line to the hipbone.

Love
(?)

Love: Make a backward, sideways 'L' going from your left to your right, ending on the same line as the I



You: Make an upside down 'U', going from your left to your right, over the L and the I

Benefit Constipation

6. WALKING

Benefit Using flat fingertips, walk backwards across baby's tummy from your left to your right.
Breaks down big wind bubbles.

THE CHEST

1. OPEN BOOK

With both hands together at the centre of the chest, push hands out to the sides, as if opening the pages of a book. Then move down the sides (without lifting hands) and up again in the centre in a heart shape.

Benefit Development of shoulders and rib cage, respiration, helps mucus move.

2. BUTTERFLY

Start with both hands just above hip bones. Your one hand moves diagonally across to your baby's opposite shoulder and gives the shoulder a gentle squeeze. Then the hand slides back to its starting position. The same action is repeated with the other hand.

Benefit Helps mucus move, creates awareness of midline (bilateral integration).

ARMS AND HANDS

1. PIT STOP

Stroke the armpits a few times, with a flat hand, massaging the lymph nodes.

Benefit Stimulates lymphatic system.

2. INDIAN MILKING

Exactly as for legs, starting at the shoulder, milking towards the hand. Brings blood to hands, warms hands, releases tension.

Benefit

3. SQUEEZE & TWIST

Exactly as for legs, starting at the shoulder, moving towards the hand.

4. OPEN HANDS

Open baby's hands with your thumbs. Roll each finger between your thumb and index finger.

Benefit Encourages grasping and holding.

5. STROKE HANDS

Stroke the top of the hand, holding baby's hand in one of your own. Relaxation, creates feeling of closeness.

Benefit

6. MASSAGE WRIST

Make small circles all around the wrist with thumbs or other fingers. Strengthens the wrist.

Benefit

7. SWEDISH MILKING

Exactly as for legs, starting at the hand, milking towards the shoulder. Brings blood back to heart and lungs to be re-oxygenated.

Benefit

8. ROLLING

Roll arm between your hands
Releases any tension that is left in the arm.

Benefit

9. STROKE WHOLE ARM

Same as legs.

REPEAT ALL TECHNIQUES ON OTHER ARM.

THE FACE

1. OPEN BOOK

With flat fingers, start at the middle of the forehead and stroke out to the sides, as if flattening the pages of a book.

Benefit Releases tension from worrying

2. THUMBS OVER EYES

With thumbs, press lightly over the eyes, from the nose outward. Releases tension from crying.

Benefit

3. NOSE & CHEEKS

With thumbs, push up towards the bridge of the nose, then down and across the cheeks.

Benefit Helps to clear sinuses and unblocks tear ducts.

4. SMILE ON LIPS

With thumbs, make a smile on the upper lip, then on the lower lip, from the centre outwards.

Benefit Tones the muscles for speech, sucking, teething.

5. CIRCLES AROUND JAW

Make small circles around the jaw with your fingertips. Clenching of teeth, and releases tension in jaw.

Benefit

6. AROUND THE EARS

Using fingertips of both hands, start in front of the ears, go around the backs of the ears and pull up under the chin. Massages the lymph nodes.

Benefit

THE BACK

1. BACK & FORTH

Start with both hands at the top of the back, at right angles to the spine. Move hands back and forth, in opposite directions, down to the buttocks and back again.

Benefit Warms up the back, loosens muscles, increases circulation.

2. SWOOPING TO BOTTOM

Keep one hand at the buttocks. With other hand, beginning at the neck, swoop down to meet the other hand at the buttocks.

Benefit Deeply relaxing and containing technique.

3. SWOOPING TO ANKLES

Hold ankles with one hand. Other hand repeats above swooping motion, but moves all the way down to the feet.

Benefit Gives baby a feeling of integration, completeness and body awareness.

4. CIRCLES OVER BACK

Make small circles all over the back with fingertips, avoiding the spine.

Benefit Loosens back muscles.

5. COMBING

Benefit

With hand open and fingers spread apart, comb down from the neck to the buttocks. Each stroke will be progressively lighter. Soothes baby and rounds off the back massage.

GENTLE MOVEMENTS

CROSS ARMS

Holding baby's arms at the wrists, stretch them out to the sides, then cross them twice over his chest.

CROSS ARM & LEG

Do same as above, but with one hand and opposite foot.

CROSS LEGS

Hold legs at the ankles. Cross them at the stomach twice, then stretch them out straight.

LEGS UP AND DOWN

Push knees together up into the tummy, then stretch them out straight.

ALTERNATING LEGS

Push knees into the tummy, but alternating legs (bicycle).

Finish with a kiss & a cuddle. Remember to thank your baby!

ABBREVIATED MESSAGE

The following massage can be done when you want to give the baby a quick rub down. This can be done with oil or cream.

1. Circles around head
2. Open book on the forehead
3. Circles on jaw
4. Open book on the chest
5. Roll arms, open hands
6. Sun & moon on stomach
7. Rolling of legs
8. Thumb over Thumb on foot
9. Back and forth on back
10. Combing on back

In a study by Weiniger, 10 mothers were taught to stroke their 10 week old infants' backs. At six months of age, these infants had fewer sniffles, colds, vomiting and diarrhoea than the infants in the control group, whose mothers had not been taught to stroke their babies.

SPECIFIC APPLICATIONS OF INFANT MASSAGE

Note: These methods are supplementary to medical treatment and should not be seen as replacement thereof.

COLIC

- First warm the stomach by giving your baby a warm bath or by placing him on his tummy over a hot water bottle wrapped in a towel, while you rub his back. Make sure the temperature is comfortable.
- You can also do the colic routine with your baby in the bath.
- Repeat three times a day.

Waterwheel	6-10 times (6 times in the beginning)
Press knees against stomach	(hold for approximately 5 seconds)
Waterwheel with legs up	6 - 10 times (6 times in the beginning)
Press knees against stomach	(hold for approximately 5 seconds)
Sun Moon	6-10 times (6 times in the beginning)
Press knees against stomach	(hold for approximately 5 seconds)

- Do not despair if the colic does not disappear overnight. Sometimes it will take days or even weeks, babies are so different and each one reacts differently to massage.

TEETHING

- Stroke baby's face from forehead to temples.
- From front of ears to back of the neck.
- Stroke the cheeks, make circles with your fingertips on the jawbone.
- Let the baby sit on your lap, facing away from you, and gently press and circle with fingertips on his cheeks, jawbone, in front of and behind the ears and the neck. (This technique can also be used to relieve earache.)

CONSTIPATION

- Same as for colic.
- Include the 'I Love You'

SINUSITIS

- Stroke firmly from bridge of the nose along cheekbones to temples (firm but gentle pressure).
- All facial strokes.

COUGHING

- Let baby lie on his back on your knees, head lower than body, do gentle percussion with cupped hands on the chest.
- Turn baby around and repeat percussion on baby's back.
- For a tiny baby (under two months, use fingertips for percussion).

HYPERSENSITIVE BABIES

- Massage may overstimulate a hypersensitive baby.
- Do containment holds (one hand on baby's head, other hand on his bottom, back, both hands or feet).
- Start massage very slowly, for short time only.
- One stimulus at a time - e.g. don't talk and massage, rock and feed, massage and music etc.
- Massage in silence, with few as possible other stimuli.
- Consult baby's therapist.

PREMATURE BABIES

- Do resting hands, containment holds and Touch Relaxation.
- Massage is not recommended for babies born before 33 weeks gestation and babies at risk. Do containment and give baby still touch, firm pressure (like the pressure in the womb), especially on the back.
- Kangaroo your baby as much as he is up to.
- For babies over 33 weeks gestation: Do one stroke at a time, stop and see what the effect is before continuing. Then do one more stroke.
- No feathering strokes - the nervous system cannot handle this yet.
- Give deeper pressure and work very slowly.
- Consult baby's pediatrician.

ADAPTING THE ROUTINE AS YOUR CHILD GROWS

Massage is a gift you can keep on giving your child as he grows - no one is too old or too young for nurturing touch! All the strokes you have learned can be used on older children, by making each stroke longer and bigger, or by using two hands instead of one. The routine with its strokes will grow with your child, and the adaptation will be as gradual as your child's development.

0-3 months



Babies are quite sensitive at this stage, and may not be able to handle more than a few minutes of massage at a time. Watch your baby's cues and respect time-out signals. If baby can handle only one minute at a time, alternate the areas that you massage, each time. The legs, feet and back are the easiest areas to massage, as your baby may still need to *protect* his chest area, making the tummy, chest and arms hard to get to. The face may also be sensitive, especially for babies born by normal delivery. Go slowly and gently, never force your baby to open up. If he becomes distressed at being uncovered, wrap him in a warm towel and massage under the towel. The temperature is very important at this stage - make sure baby is warm enough.

3-6 months



This is the ideal time for massage, as the baby's body is more open and they are a little stronger. They may be able to handle up to 20 minutes of massage at a time. If your baby starts to roll over, allow him to practise, and continue the massage on his back/ front, adapting your movements slightly for the arms and legs. Remember that rolling is a wonderful achievement to be praised! Another achievement is grabbing, so baby may enjoy holding a soft toy as you massage - this will keep him entertained.

Active crawler (6-12 months)



The first thing to remember when dealing with a crawling baby, is that crawling and exploring the world, is his task at this time in his life. A crawler will seldom stay still for more than a minute or two, unless he's asleep. Massage is still possible, but the routine will certainly change to suit this stage. The baby needs space to discover his environment, you may have to let the massage routine go for a while. Do some stroking and quick massaging when baby is still for a moment. If the baby is sitting on your lap, you may do a quick hand and foot massage. When baby is sleepy at naptime, he may enjoy a short massage. When baby is taking a bath, his arms, legs, back and tummy can be massaged while he's playing in the water. Other opportunities include when baby is looking at pictures in a book or drinking his bottle (be gentle on the tummy area). Rhymes, games and songs help to keep baby entertained.

Toddler (1-2 years)



Toddlers, just like crawlers, need to explore. They can be quite impatient, as they do not have a notion of time yet. Everything must happen NOW, "later" means nothing. Use the same approach as you did at 6-12 months. Remember that learning to walk is a great achievement, and should be respected!

2 years



This is the NO stage. If you verbally ask permission for massage, the child could say no. Massage is still possible, but with respect for the child. Reading your toddler's body language can be helpful in this case too. It is wise to do massage at a time when the child is quiet, perhaps while reading to him, to do some stroking. Language becomes very important here, and songs, rhymes and games will add to the fun of a massage.

3 years



At three years, you may be able to do the massage routine in full again. Your child has developed a stronger sense of identity, and is over the worst NO stage. He has a better understanding of time, and you may be able to tell him, "We're going to massage now, and play later". Language is so important for three-year-olds, and they will enjoy learning the names of the different strokes, and may even want to try on mummy! Allow this, massage has become a way of life for your child, let him share it. Put some cream or lotion in a small container, and let him rub it into your legs, feet, arms, back and face. It may seem messy but it is a wonderful moment. Enjoy! Another favorite at this time is the Garden Song. (You can make up your own words and tune.) "In my garden, I have planted...peas, carrots, beans, potatoes" etc. Make the shapes on your child's back and allow him to make suggestions. You can also add some sunshine, wind, waves, you can rake the garden...be creative!

Pre-school Child



Fantasy plays a very important role during this stage. Respect this world your child creates. Continue the massage as you have up to now, and let your child improvise with you. It is a wonderful opportunity to keep in touch - literally and figuratively - with what is happening to your child. Create a space for your child to talk, and listen carefully. A nice way is to ask, "What was good about today?"

School age Child



During this stage the child may become self-conscious about being naked, and you need to respect this. This is a time when children start questioning and have many fears, and massage is a wonderful way of showing love to the child. The child may enjoy a "sports massage" if he feels uncomfortable with the normal baby routine. Concentrate on the legs, feet, arms and back. The tactile needs of boys change at around 7-8 years, and touch needs to be more robust. Do some firm percussion on the back and legs, using the side of your hands, with fingers spread slightly. At 11 years, girls have tremendous "skin hunger," and positive touch, especially from the father, is very important for the development of a healthy self-image.

Adolescent



This is the time when the child is halfway between child and adult, and this brings all sorts of confused feelings. Hormones play a part in this stage, the child's body is unbalanced and clumsy and he/she will probably feel awkward and embarrassed. Adolescents are unpredictable, and may be too shy and proud to say yes to massage, but may still allow it under certain circumstances. This is also a stage, like the terrible two's when you don't ask verbal permission, but have the same attitude of respect towards your child. It may help to have a subtle approach, and massage the child's feet or shoulders while he is busy concentrating on a book or a movie. Girls may enjoy a "facial". It is still a wonderful way of expressing love and giving your child the reassurance he needs, and to create space for your child to talk.

FATHERS AND BABY MASSAGE

Massage is a lovely way for fathers to strengthen the bond with their babies, getting to know and understand them better.

Interesting research was carried out in Australia by Scholz and Samuels (1992). 32 First time fathers participated in a study on the effects of a training programme of baby massage and in particular bath techniques on the father-infant relationship.

Half the fathers were taught the massage and bath techniques with their babies at four weeks old.

At twelve weeks, the behaviours of the two groups were compared. The massaged babies greeted their fathers with more eye contact, smiling, vocalizing, reaching out to them and showing less avoidance behaviour. It was also noted that the treatment group fathers showed greater involvement with their babies than the control group.

(From an article by Suzanne Adamson - Complementary Therapies in Nursing and Midwifery (1996) 2.)

POST NATAL DEPRESSION AND BABY MASSAGE

Research was carried out to establish the effect baby massage had on mothers suffering from post natal depression.

The benefit of the massage classes to the mothers and babies was very clear. Although other studies have shown that both counselling and drug treatment can improve mothers' depression, this is the first time that an improvement in mother-baby interaction has been established. The study suggests that massage classes, for women with postnatal depression, have a potentially very important, acceptable and safe role in helping with this problem.

WEATHER

Once upon a time there was a big yellow sun,....

(one hand rests on the shoulder, the other hand makes a clockwise circle on the back.)

...that warmed the whole world
(*rays* to the sides)

But look, clouds appear and cover the sun

(make small circles with fingerpads)

Then the wind comes
(Stroke to and fro with fingertips)

And blows harder... and harder....and harder....

(Stroke with hand from side to side...and harder...and harder)

...until the wind turned into a tornado and hurricane
(begin at shoulders and make "tornado" like strokes with fingerpads)

Then came the lightning...

(make "lightning" with fingertips)

... and thunder
(clap on the back with hands)

Then came the rain

(begin at shoulders and stroke down with fingerpads)

And it rained harder... and harder...
(same as above except faster and faster)

... until the rain turned into hail... and more hail

(*play* with fingertips on back... harder and harder)

Then it began to snow, and everything was white and beautiful
(push lightly and slowly over back)

And the only thing to see was the cat that climbed up the roof of the house... and another cat...and another cat

(*climb* up towards the neck by first using palm of hand then "rolling" the hand upwards, first one side, then the middle of the back, then the other side)

Finally fog appeared and everything became still
(lay hands still on back)

Until the sun came out, and warmed up the earth once again
(slowly take hands away)