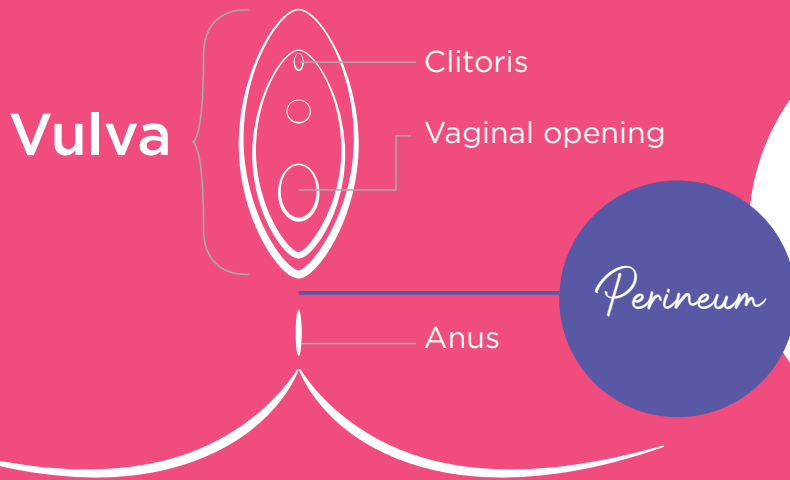


Perineal Massage

the massage technique



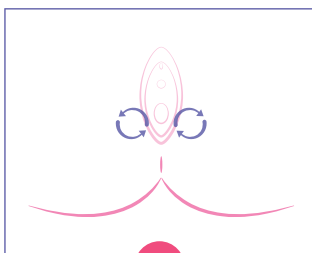
The *Perineum* is the skin & muscle between the vagina & the anus. During birth, it can tear or require a cut (episiotomy) as the baby stretches the vagina.

The more *prepared & comfortable* you are with your body & the birth process, the more *relaxed* you will be when your baby's *head* is emerging.

Benefits

- Lowers the risk of tearing & episiotomy
- Stretches tissues & scar tissue
- Helps prepare women for birth

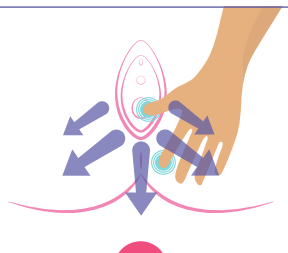
A step-by-step guide to Perineal Massage



1

Pro Tip: Prior to beginning perineal massage, use a perineal massage oil to condition the external skin of the perineum.

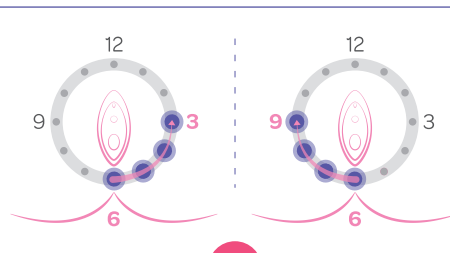
Make small, **circular movements** on either side of the vulva to warm the tissue.



2

Put thumb or finger **about an inch** into your vagina.

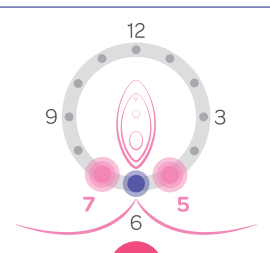
Gently stretch the tissue at the vaginal entrance, holding it between thumb and forefinger.



3

Massage from the **6 o'clock to 3 o'clock** position, then from the **6 o'clock to 9 o'clock** position.

Focus on the area at the entrance to the vagina. Take your time and **repeat each side 3-4 times**. Be gentle but firm enough to work into the tissue.



4

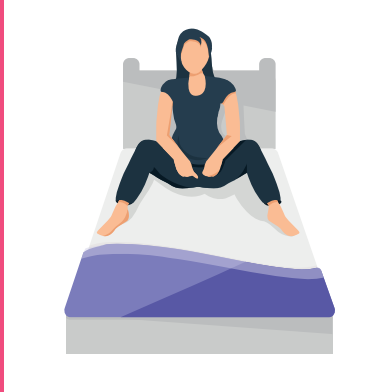
Finish with gentle outwards stretches at the **5 and 7 o'clock** positions, holding for **30-45 seconds**.

Mothers may find it helpful to stretch any scar tissue from previous births.

Perineal Massage

preparation

It is important you find a comfortable position.
Here are some suggestions:



Reclining on pillows
on a bed or sofa



Sitting on a
chair or toilet



In the shower with one
leg resting on a stool

Perineal Massage promotes the *skin* around the *perineum* to *stretch* more easily during childbirth & has been shown to reduce the risk of a *perineal tear* or *episiotomy*.

How often?



Approx. **10 mins**



3-4
times
a week

When?

Perineal Massage
can be practiced
by women in their
3rd trimester of
pregnancy from...

34
WEEKS

Preparation

Hygiene:
ensure hands
are washed &
fingernails
short.



**Prepare: have a
mirror for assistance.**

A small mirror can be a
helpful visual guide and
connect you and your
body, especially
when preparing
for birth.



**Time: choose a
space which feels
comfortable & quiet.**

This is 'your time,
your space'
to connect
your body
& mind.



**Unwind: A warm bath
may help to relax.**

This allows the
blood vessels to dilate,
softening the perineum
in preparation for
massage.



Safety

A mild, prickling sensation is common especially when starting to practice Perineal Massage. It is important to address any concerns you may have before you begin the massage with your **healthcare provider**.

Women with genital herpes, thrush, or any other **active vaginal infection should not practice Perineal Massage**. It may be helpful to discuss perineal massage technique with your healthcare provider.