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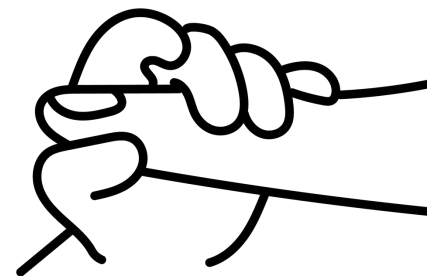
## The Palmar Grasp Reflex

### What is the Palmar Grasp Reflex?

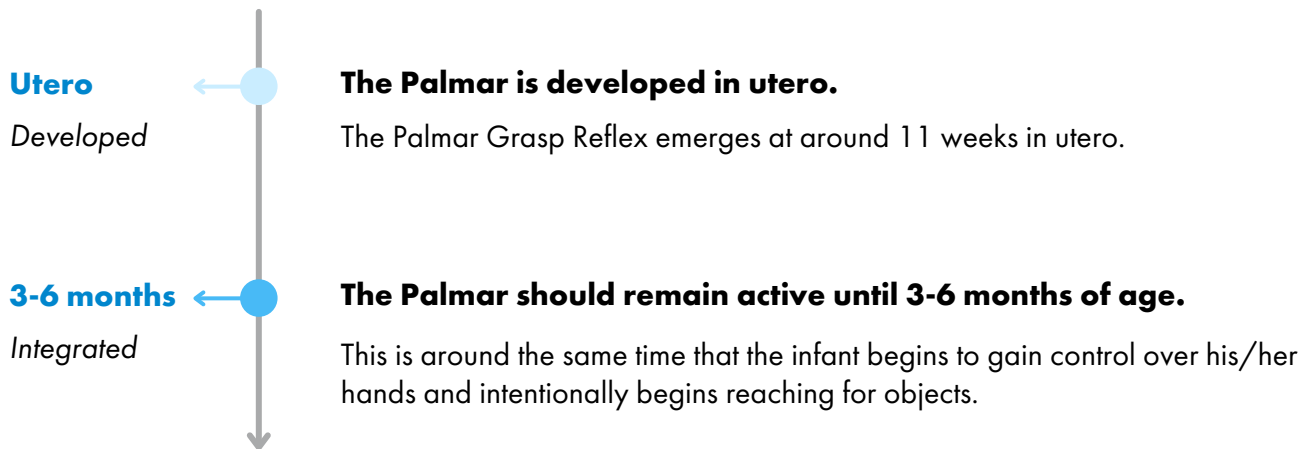
- You know how infants basically have a death grip - they can grab your finger, your hair, your clothes - that's the Palmar Reflex at work!
- The Palmar Grasp Reflex is elicited by pressure to the infant's palm, resulting in the fingers closing around the object that provided pressure, as well as gripping or holding on - that death grip!
- Remember, this is an involuntary movement - it happens before the infant has control over his/her hands. One study from 2020 stated that,
  - "The Palmar Reflex probably serves to create a basic motor pattern that lays the foundation for obtaining this voluntary ability. Furthermore, this reflection creates interaction and bond between the infant and the adult."
- The hands and the mouth are directly linked which means that the Palmar Grasp Reflex is also activated when the infant is nursing/drinking from a bottle.
- You can often see this connection as the infant sucks - the hands will reflexively clench in coordination with the sucking.
- This reflex completes the myelination of neural pathways used in hand and mouth movements, which aids the infant with suckling and eventually with speech, and fine motor movements.

Source:

[ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK553133](https://ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK553133)



## Palmar Grasp Integration:



## Special Notes on Integration:

### Special Note #1

An article from the International Journal of Pediatrics stated that the Palmar Reflex may be retained longer, compared to “normal” infants, “in infants with spastic hemiplegia or quadriplegia, whereas it is very weak in infants with cerebral palsy (CP) of the athetoid type.”

### Special Note #2

Because of the hand - mouth connection, a child with a retained Palmar Grasp may also have a retained Rooting and/or Suck Reflex.

### Special Note #3

While there is no guarantee for reflex integration, there are contributing factors to consider if your child has an unintegrated Palmar Grasp.

Source:

[journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0214548](https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0214548)

## What an unintegrated Palmar Grasp looks like:

**Decreased overall fine motor skills with notable overflow associated movements during challenging fine motor tasks that are new, challenging or require extensive focus.**

**Additionally, we can see self-injurious behaviors, nail biting and thumb sucking beyond the age of 1.5 years old with an unintegrated Palmar Grasp.**

**Due to the connection to the Rooting / Suck Reflex, we can often see oral motor / speech and articulation problems as children develop. We can also observe tightening of the jaw with clenched fists.**

## Additional symptoms of a potentially retained Palmar Grasp:

- Challenges with fine motor tasks, including grasp on small objects, handwriting, self-feeding, and manipulation of clothing fasteners
- Potential challenges with speech and articulation
- Overflow into the mouth during fine motor tasks (sticking tongue out, etc. )
- Tactile hypersensitivity - specifically to hands
- Challenges with directionality (left vs right)
- Dysgraphia