



YOUTUBE FREEBIE

The Rooting Reflex

What is the Rooting Reflex?

- The Rooting Reflex is essential for survival and growth, as it assists the newborn in finding food and initiating feeding.
- When the corner of the infant's mouth is stimulated, the infant will turn his/her head towards the stimulus and open their mouth, with tongue thrusting (getting ready for the suck reflex to be stimulated).
- It has been stated that the Rooting Reflex is strongest at birth, specifically within the first few hours. If the baby does not receive gratification for 'rooting' or go through the motion of rooting to find the breast, the reflex will weaken.
- The strength of the reflex fluctuates depending on feeding schedules, however as with other reflexes, if it is not used fully at the proper time, it appears to become unfulfilled, frustrated, and unable to let go, which can, in turn, look like feeding challenges.

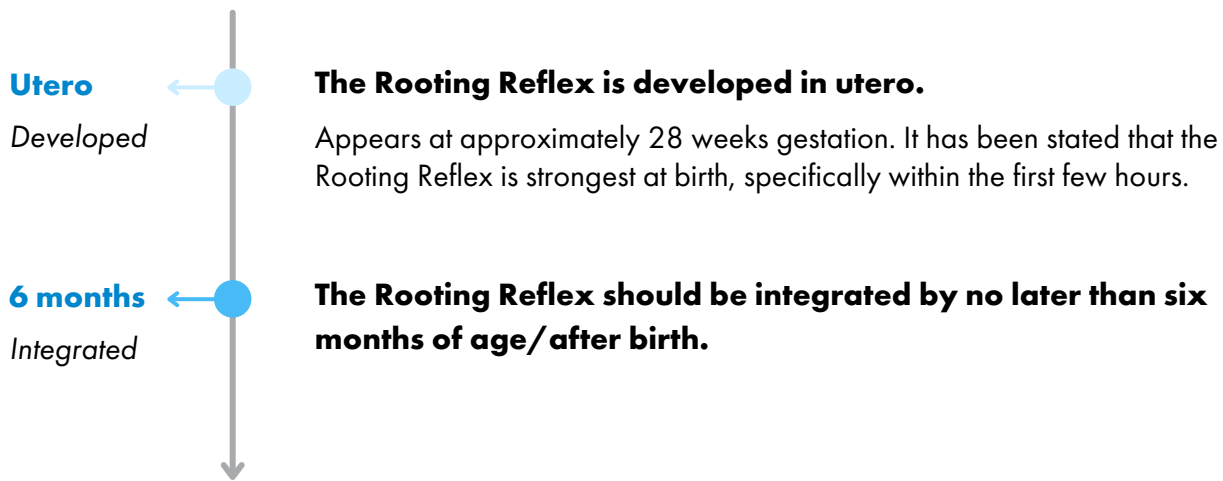
Connected to the Rooting Reflex is the Suck Reflex:

- The suck reflex is also essential for survival and growth, as it allows the infant to coordinate breathing with swallowing.
- The suck reflex initiates when the roof of the mouth is stimulated (after the Rooting Reflex has activated to locate the bottle or breast) and begins the process of feeding.
- Because of the connection between the Rooting Reflex and the Sucking Reflex, if one is significantly retained, it's likely that the other will also be retained.

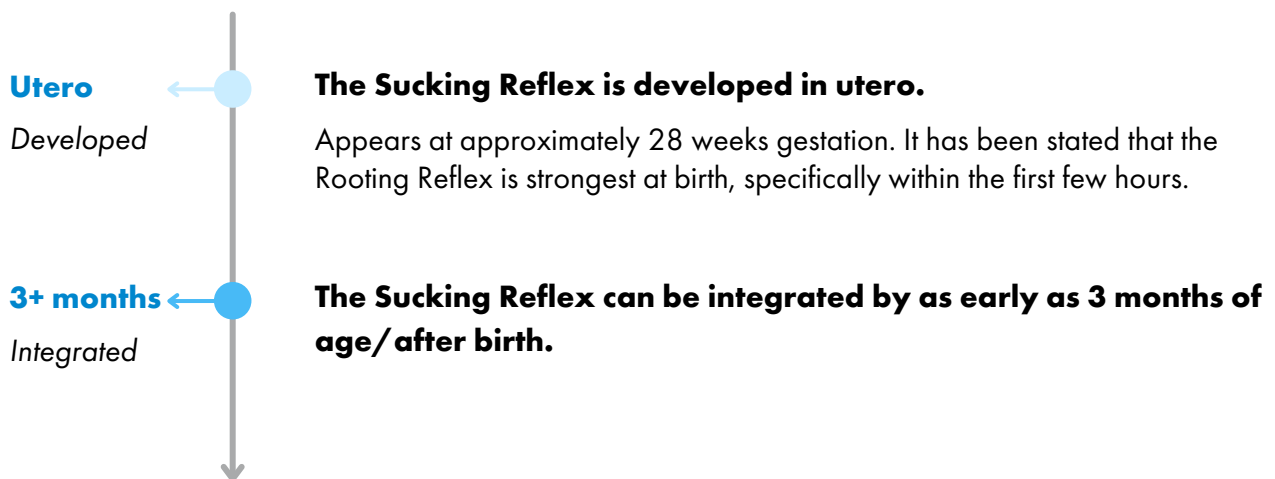
Source:
Reflexes, Learning and Behavior



Rooting Reflex Integration:



Suck Reflex Integration:



Special Notes on Integration:

Special Note #1

If a child has successfully integrated their primitive reflexes, a sudden or chronic bout of trauma, stress or injury can re-activate these reflexes.

Special Note #2

While there is no guarantee for reflex integration, there are contributing factors to consider if the child has an unintegrated Rooting (or Suck) Reflex.

Special Note #3

Because of the connection between these two reflexes, if one is significantly retained, it's likely that the other will also be retained.

It's Important to Note the Babkin Palmomentary Reflex:

Babkin Palmomentary Reflex

There is a strong connection between hand and mouth activities in infants. When pressure is applied to the palms of the hands, the mouth will open reflexively.

This explains the concept of the hand and mouth sharing common neurological connections.

Babies learn about their environment through mouthing objects and this evolution of hands to mouth exploring leads to development of speech.

Source:

The Symphony of Reflexes

What an unintegrated Rooting Reflex looks like:

Retrained oral reflexes can result in sensitivity and immature responses to touch, in and around the mouth region, specifically the lips.

The infant may struggle with introducing solid foods, as a persistent suck reflex will prevent the tongue from developing the mature combination of mouth movements required for swallowing safely.

The tongue may rest too far forward; this inhibits effective chewing.

Droling and manual dexterity difficulties can also be observed in school aged children with a retained Rooting / Suck Reflex, due to the connection between the Babkin response.

Additional symptoms of a potentially retained Rooting (and/or Suck) Reflex:

- Anterior tongue tie
- Thumb sucking
- Hypersensitivity of oral cavities
- Drooling / dribbling beyond a normal age
- Feeding challenges
- Speech and articulation delays / challenges
- Chewing and swallowing deficits