

# THE INS & OUTS OF PERINEAL MASSAGE



## WHY?

Perineal massage has been clinically proven to help stretch the perineum and make it more elastic, therefore reducing your risk of tearing and the need for an episiotomy. (A cut to the perineum sometimes recommended for medical reasons in childbirth).

## WHAT?

The perineum is the skin and muscular area between your vagina and anus (your back passage) consisting of pelvic floor muscles as well as the anal sphincter which controls the anus. The perineum is the area that stretches during vaginal birth.

## BENEFITS

Studies have proved that perineal massage prepares the perineum for childbirth by making the perineum more supple and stretchy, so reducing the chance of superficial and deep tears.

## RISKS

There is no evidence to suggest there are any risks associated with perineal massage, but it is not recommended if there is a vaginal infection such as thrush or herpes.

my expert  
midwife.

# A GUIDE TO PERINEAL MASSAGE

1

First find a perineal massage oil. You can use our midwife developed Peri Prep Your Bits or a food oil, such as almond oil.



2

After washing your hands, sit comfortably, bring your knees together and towards your chest and then open your knees like a book, or you may find it easier to put one foot on the toilet/bath/stool in a similar way to how you would insert a tampon.



3

Put a small amount of the massage oil on your perineum to make the massage more comfortable.



4

Using your thumbs, insert them into your vagina and then place your forefingers on the skin of your perineum.

5

You now need to stretch this skin gently by pressing downwards towards your anus and to the sides until you feel a slight burning, stretching sensation. Hold the stretch for 1 to 2 minutes.



6

Massage the area between your thumb and fingers upwards and outwards and back again in a "U" shape.

## BUT FOR HOW LONG?

Perineal massage should be performed from 34 weeks of pregnancy, 3-4 times a week for 3-4 minutes.

## CAN MY PARTNER HELP?

Check out [myexpertmidwife.com/perinealmassage](http://myexpertmidwife.com/perinealmassage) for more information and instructions on how your partner can help with perineal massage

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