

Massage To Help Your Baby's Digestion



Babies cry for a variety of reasons and one of the leading reasons is that she is suffering from digestive pain and discomfort. If your baby is particularly restless and shows signs of discomfort after feeding, you may want to consider trying **baby massage**.

What Is Baby Massage?

Baby massage is the gentle rhythmic stroking of your infant's body with your hands. During the massage you may carefully pump your child's legs, manipulate her fingers, and move her wrists and ankles. All of these actions help stimulate the production of oxytocin (otherwise known as the "feel-good" hormone) and can help your **baby's digestion**.

How Baby Massage Can Help Your Baby's Digestion

By using gentle, careful strokes, you can help move milk and any built up gas around the intestines and eliminate a number of issues including:

- Cramping
- Constipation



- Pain

Baby massage has also been shown to **help with gastro-oesophageal reflux** (commonly known as acid reflux). This condition causes the milk and stomach acid in your little one's stomach to be pushed back up and into the baby's throat, causing her pain. It may also cause your baby to vomit.

While baby massage does not massage the actual muscle or muscles responsible for reflux, touching and massaging your baby's skin across her whole body stimulates her Vagus nerve. This nerve controls many aspects of your baby's digestive system and can help push the milk and acid back into the stomach.

How To Massage Your Baby

Before you begin, make sure that you find a warm room with a soft surface on which to lay your baby. Find an organic or edible oil or lotion which you have tested on your baby for any negative reactions, and keep your little one in her nappy.

Step 1

Start off by laying your baby on her back so that she is facing you. If your baby is in pain, begin by gently bringing her knees in towards her stomach to help release any trapped gas.

Step 2

Draw a circle with her knees and move them in a clockwise direction. Apply pressure on her abdomen when drawing the upper half of the circle and release pressure when drawing the lower half of the circle.

If your baby straightens her legs and becomes tense, you can help relax her by placing your hands beneath her bottom. Bend her knees, speak quietly to her or hum, and slowly rock her hips from side to side.



Step 3

Spread oil with both of your hands using long strokes from your baby's chest down to her legs and feet. Then, just beneath her belly button, use one hand at a time to move your hand towards you in a slow wiping motion.

Step 4

Imagine that there is a 2 cm box around her belly button. Using your fingertips, draw a circle around the imaginary box in a clockwise direction. As you continue to draw the full circle with one hand, take your other hand and have it follow behind, drawing a half circle. This is known as the "sun moon" technique.

Step 5

Now it is time for the "I Love U" technique. Take your fingertips and draw along the imaginary box. In a downward motion from your baby's upper left side draw the letter "I" from the top to the bottom. Draw an upside down "L" beginning at the upper right corner of the box moving towards the left and draw downwards. Finally, draw an upside down "U" beginning at the bottom right hand corner of the box, moving upwards, and then across to the bottom of the left hand corner of the box.

Step 6

Take your baby's legs into both of your hands and move them in a cycling motion. With one leg at a time, gently apply pressure into her lower abdomen for five seconds before moving to the next leg.

Step 7

Finish off your massage by placing your hand firmly on your baby's stomach to connect with your baby. It will also help you feel for any bubbles or gas in her intestines.



Most parents will find that in order to ease their baby's pain that they will need to perform the above steps four to six times each. Make sure that you always massage your baby's stomach in a clockwise motion, and consult your doctor if you suspect your baby is **suffering from colic**.

Trying to soothe an uncomfortable baby can be upsetting and stressful for parents.

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