

# TOUCH A Parent's Guide to Infant Massage

The following pictures illustrate some basic techniques you may wish to follow with your baby. Remember, any kind of touching and stroking will benefit your child as long as it is done with patience, love and care. When parents and babies are in tune with each other, tiny as they may be, babies know they are wanted, valued and loved!

## POINTS TO REMEMBER

If your baby seems a bit tired and would rather be sleeping, try again after his nap. Both of you should be awake and relaxed to enjoy the massage experience.

At about 4 to 7 months, when starting to crawl, babies are more active and may not need as much massage.

Remember baby's face. Sucking and teething are hard work on facial muscles — stroke and kiss your baby's face to help him release tension.

You are your baby's mirror. He will reflect what he sees. Be sure you are ready and relaxed before beginning.

Lastly, and most importantly, massage is not meant to be mechanical or routine. It should only be performed with the full cooperation of your baby. This is obtained through love, affection and lots of kisses and hugs. Above all, baby massage is intended to be a playful, healthy activity that will bring pleasure to both you and your baby.



## FACE

### GIGGLE AND GRIN

Baby's face may accumulate a great deal of tension through sucking, teething, crying and generally interacting with the ever-expanding world around him. With your thumbs, make smiles on the upper and lower lips.



## CHEST

### VALENTINE

With your hands together at the center of the chest, push out to the sides, following baby's rib cage, as if you were flattening the pages of a book. Without lifting your hands from the baby, bring them around in a heart-shaped "valentine" motion to center.



## ARMS

### UNDER ARM

First lift the arm and stroke the armpit a few times; this massages the important lymph nodes in that area.



### BASEBALL WARM-UP (ARMS)

Hold your hands together around baby's arm at the shoulder (as if you were holding a baseball bat). Then move your hands in opposite directions, back and forth, from baby's shoulder to hand, gently squeezing as you do.



### TUMMY STROKE

A. Using the outside of each hand, make paddling strokes on baby's tummy, one hand following the other, as if you were scooping sand toward yourself.



### TUMMY STROKE

B. Hold up baby's legs with your left hand and grasp the ankles. Then repeat the paddling motion, using the right hand only. This will relax the stomach and will permit you to massage a little more deeply.



## STOMACH

Massage of baby's stomach will tone the intestinal system and help relieve gas and constipation. Most of these strokes end at baby's lower left belly (your right when facing the baby). This is the path waste follows on its way out of the body. The purpose of massage is to move everything toward the exit.



### FINGERTIP TIPTOE

Using your fingertips, tiptoe across baby's tummy from your left to right. You may feel some gas bubbles moving under your fingers.



### RAINBOW

A. "Rain." Make a single downward stroke with your right hand on baby's left belly (your right).  
B. "Wind." Make an upside-down "L" going from your left to right.  
C. "Rainbow." Make an rainbow shape (an upside-down "U") going from your left to right.



### BASEBALL WARM-UP (LEGS)

Hold baby's leg as if you were holding a baseball bat. Then move your hands up the leg together, turning in opposite directions and squeezing slightly.

## LEGS



### LEG ROLL

Roll baby's legs from knee to ankle between your hands.

## ARMS

## BACK

### BACK RUB

Start with your hands together at the top of baby's back, at right angles to the spine. Move your hands back and forth, in opposite directions, going down the back to the buttocks, then up to the shoulders, and back down once again.



1

Find a comfortable place where you and your baby can remain undisturbed for about 15 minutes. Set the mood to help you both relax. Play gentle music if you wish. If you are both relaxed, massage is a rewarding experience.

2

While massaging your baby, the room should be comfortably warm. Your baby needs a soft, comfortable surface to lie on. In case they are needed, a clean diaper or soft towel should be nearby. It's best to give a massage when the baby is unclothed — especially after bathing — or it can be performed while your baby is dressed.

3

If you wish, a small amount of a mild baby oil can be used to help your hands glide smoothly over your infant's delicate skin. If your baby has dry skin, a gentle lotion designed for babies may be used instead of oil. Lotion helps moisturize dry skin. Do not apply oil or lotion to red or irritated skin. If a rash develops, discontinue use.

4

Make sure your hands are warm by rubbing them together before you touch your baby. If you are using baby oil, use enough for your hands to glide comfortably over your baby's body. As you become more confident and your baby gets used to being massaged, gradually increase the pressure of your touch. Most babies do not like being touched lightly because it's too much like tickling.

Touch and Massage in Early Child Development Professional Publication



The materials available in our Touch Program demonstrate the benefits of touch on the health of infants and children, as well as for the mother during pregnancy, labor and the postpartum period. This unique program is supported by research that is reviewed in these materials and translated for practical application. For downloadable versions, see [www.jjpi.com](http://www.jjpi.com).

Professional Monograph

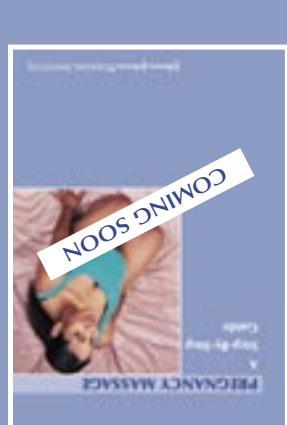
Skin to Skin: The Mother/Baby Package



Importance of Touch A Parent's Guide



Pregnancy Massage: A Step-By-Step Guide Fold-out Poster



TOUCH: Other Resources



TOUCH A Parent's Guide to Infant Massage

Every child deserves a healthy start in life. For almost a decade, the Johnson & Johnson Pediatric Institute, L.L.C. (JJPI) has been devoted to improving the lives of children and their families. From their first breaths through their early years, children are challenged to survive and thrive in the world. Every country, every family and every child face unique obstacles to the promise of a healthy life. At our partners, we develop high-impact educational programs to: address the challenges and priorities in children's health. A commitment to mothers and their babies has been at the heart of Johnson & Johnson for over 100 years. Resources for professionals and parents are a vital part of the Johnson & Johnson Pediatric Institute's programming. We hope you find the following educational material a valuable resource.

- Ensure mothers have safe and healthy pregnancies
- Improve care for babies – from birth through the early years

PREFACE

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO INFANT MASSAGE



THE VALUE OF MASSAGE

Massage is a wonderful way to keep your baby healthy and happy. It is also a great way to bring you and your baby closer together. Touching and close physical contact during a massage have many benefits for babies and parents alike. The special moments you spend together will help the two of you understand and communicate with each other.

Massage benefits the baby's heart, breathing, digestion and blood circulation. It helps prepare their little bodies for physical activity and improves overall mobility. Massage encourages muscular coordination and flexibility and helps as the baby stretches, moves around and grows. Massage also helps babies relax and fall asleep. Your baby's (and later your child's) ability to relax will help with the pressures of growing up. It's a wonderful gift to give at an early age.

Massage also makes you feel good because your baby loves it and looks happy. For mothers, touching and massaging can stimulate milk production and help you relax. Fathers benefit, too, because giving a massage is a special way to become closer to your baby.

PREPARING TO MASSAGE

One thing to remember is that newborn babies have a fairly short attention span. Because of this, a massage should last only about 15 minutes and be very simple. Try to massage when your baby is not hungry or cranky. Massage is meant to make both of you feel good: to help you get the most enjoyment, watch your baby to see what he or she likes.