

AT-HOME ORAL ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

Please only do these assessments when your baby is happy and alert. Follow your baby cues and stop if they get upset or turn away and try again later



Remember that this assessment is just a starting point and doesn't take the place of a thorough breastfeeding or bottle-feeding and oral assessment by a professional



Wash your hands thoroughly before performing the assessment.

Gently place your baby in a comfortable position on your lap or on a soft surface. Make sure their head is in a neutral position and not tipped back too far

Always seek permission from your baby before starting any assessments in their mouth by talking to baby, smiling and making eye contact

Softly stroke your baby's lips with your index finger. Then tap their top lip and wait for them to open their mouth.

TONGUE TIP SHAPE ASSESSMENT

How to: look at the shape of your baby's tongue when crying or opening their mouth

Expectation: the tip should be rounded



Tongue Tip

My Baby:

- Tongue is Heart shaped
- Tongue has a slight Cleft or Notched
- Tongue is Rounded

FRENULUM ATTACHMENT ASSESSMENT

How to: Assess visually or use index finger to feel under the tongue

Expectation: frenulum should be attached to floor of mouth



Frenulum attachment

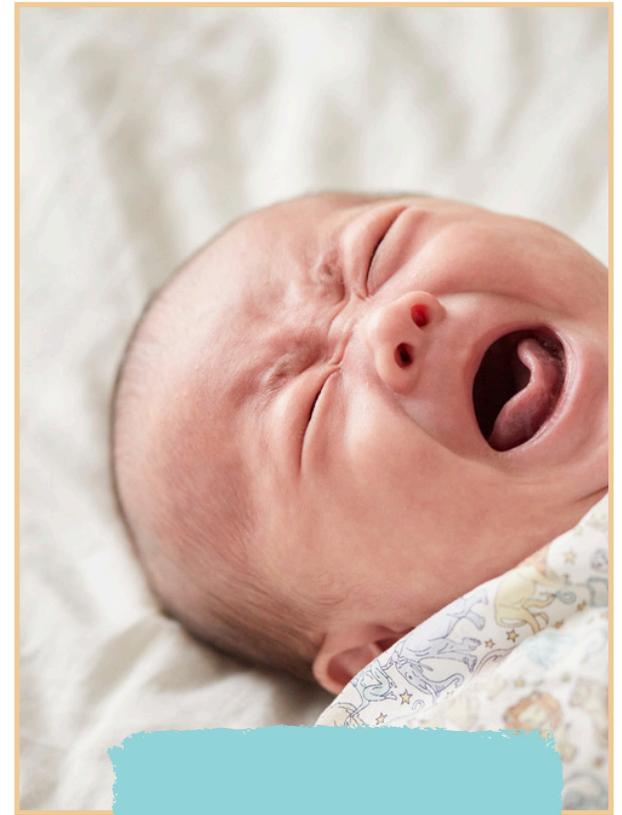
My Baby:

- frenulum is attached right to the top of gum ridge
- frenulum is attached to the inner aspect of the gum
- frenulum is attached to the floor of the mouth
- I cannot see a frenulum

TONGUE LIFT ASSESSMENT

How to: watch them cry or if sleeping lift tongue with index finger

Expectation: with mouth wide open tongue tip should lift up to mid-mouth



Tongue Lift

My Baby:

- tongue stays quite flat in the floor of the mouth
- tongue edges curl up to form a bowl or 'v' shape.
- full tongue lifts at least to half way to the upper lip (mid mouth)

TONGUE EXTENSION ASSESSMENT

How to: In the middle of your baby's lower lip, gently stroke downward with the pad of your finger

Expectation: Your baby should extend their tongue to reach your finger, extending past the lower lip



**Tongue
Extension**

My Baby:

- Cannot extend their tongue past the lower gum line
- Extends their tongue past the lower gum line but not to the lower lip
- Extends their tongue to the lower lip, touching the lower lip but not going over or past it
- Extends their tongue over and past the lower lip

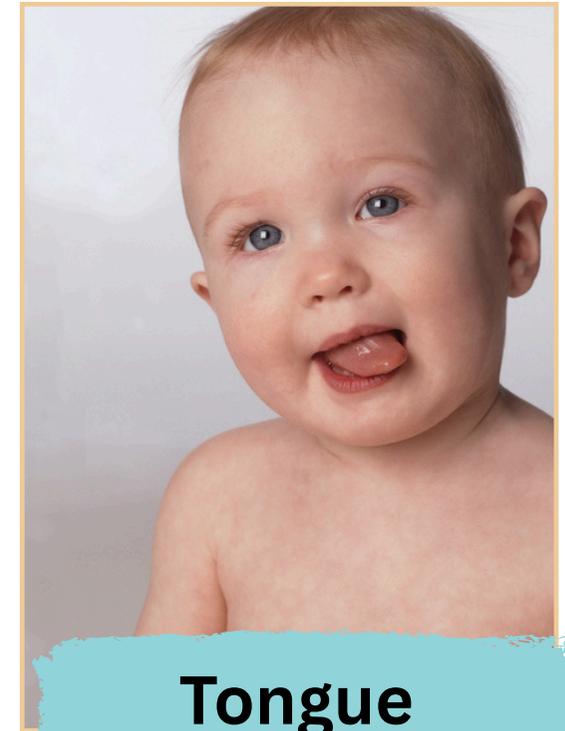
TONGUE LATERALISATION ASSESSMENT

How to: Pad side down, gently rub your finger across the ridge of your baby's bottom gum line, starting from where the molars would erupt . Complete on both sides

Expectation: Your baby should easily move their tongue side to side, following your finger

My Baby:

- Does not follow my finger at all
- Follows my finger only on the right side
- Follows my finger only on left side
- Follows my finger from side to side with the body of their tongue
- Follows my finger from side to side with the tip of their tongue

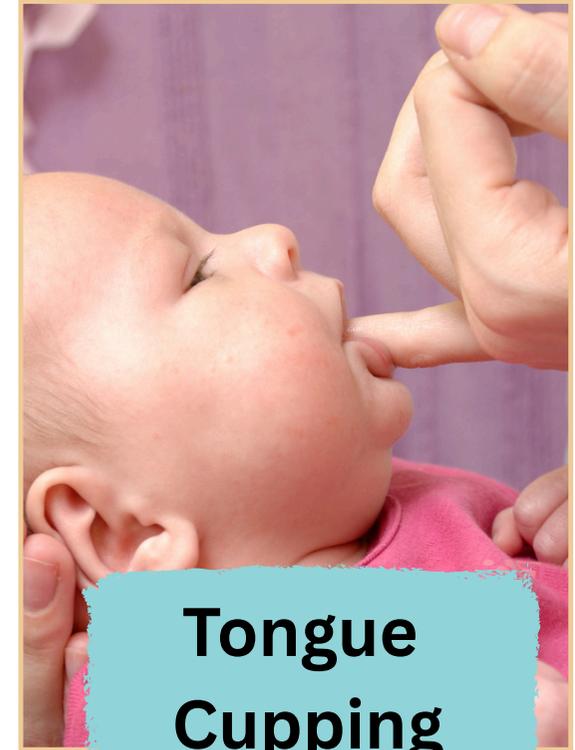


**Tongue
Lateralisation**

TONGUE CUPPING ASSESSMENT

How to: Insert your index finger (or pinky if you have large hands) pad side up into baby's mouth. As they suck, gently pull the jaw so that the tongue is exposed.

Expectation: Your baby's tongue should stay in contact with your finger, with the sides of their tongue cupping your finger like a taco



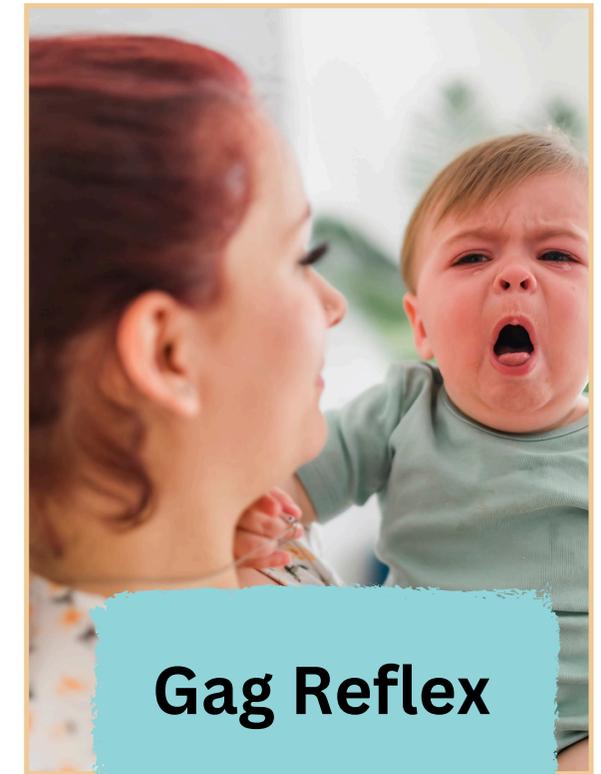
My Baby:

- Cannot cup my finger
- Cups my finger with their tongue edges but loses contact with my finger frequently
- Cups my finger with their tongue edges but the tongue comes off my finger occasionally
- Keeps their tongue in constant contact with my finger with the entire edge of the tongue cupping my finger

GAG REFLEX ASSESSMENT

How to: Let them suck on your finger pad side up at a depth that is comfortable for them

Expectation: Your baby should be able to take your finger deep into their mouth, to where the hard and soft palate meet without gagging.

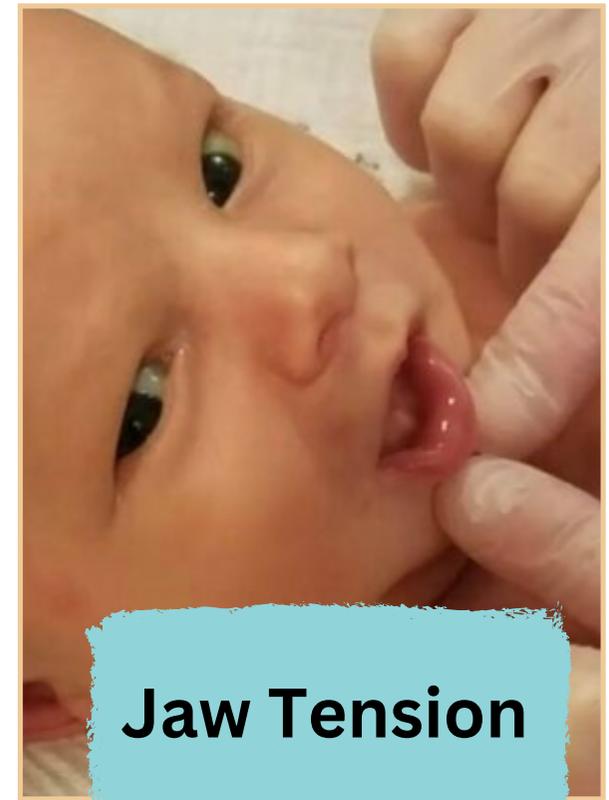


Gag Reflex

My Baby:

- Gags at the breast, bottles, dummy
- Gags when my pad gets to the bumpy ridges of the hard palate
- Gags before my finger reaches the hard and soft palate but after the bumpy ridges of the hard palate
- Easily allows my finger to reach junction of hard and soft palate without gagging

JAW TENSION ASSESSMENT



Jaw Tension

How to: When your baby's mouth is closed, gently provide downward pressure with your index fingers so that their mouth opens to a "wide open" position

Expectation: Your baby should easily open their mouth to a "wide open" position

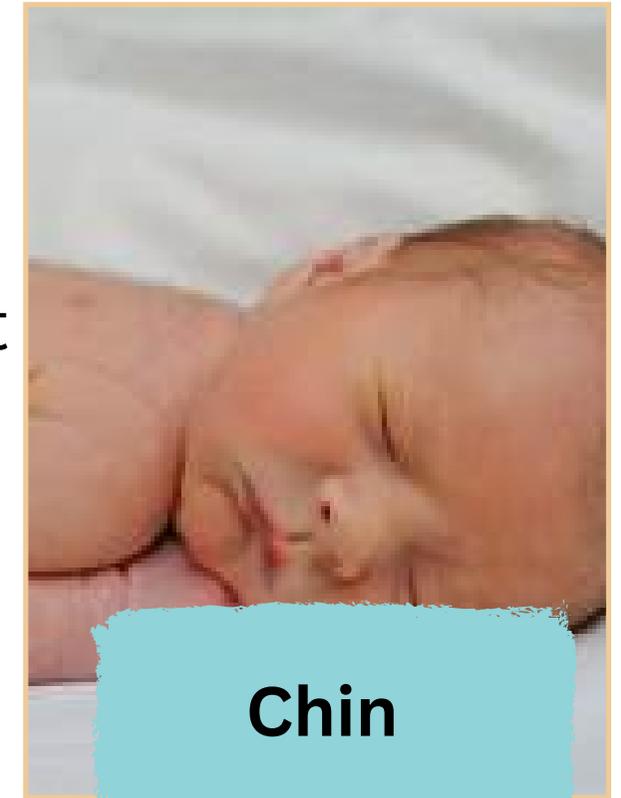
My Baby:

- Does not easily open their mouth and cannot assume a "wide open" position
- Easily opens their mouth but won't open to a "wide open" position without additional pressure downward.
- Easily opens their mouth to a wide open position after a slight delay but no additional pressure
- Easily opens their mouth to a "wide open" position

CHIN RECESSION ASSESSMENT

How to: observe the alignment and symmetry of the upper and lower jaw

Expectation: the upper and lower jaw should fit together



Chin

My Baby:

- Chin sits further back than the rest of his face
- Lower lip is tucked inward
- Upper and lower jaw fit together normally