



# SECOND NATURE LACTATION

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## IMPROVING SUCKING SKILLS

PLEASE NOTE THAT THESE EXERCISES SHOULD BE IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE GUIDANCE OF YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER

- TELL YOUR BABY WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO BE WORKING ON.
- WAIT FOR YOUR BABY TO INITIATE THE SUCKING MOVEMENT, AND LET YOUR BABY DRAW YOUR FINGER IN DEEPER, RATHER THAN YOU WIGGLING YOUR FINGER IN TOO DEEPLY.
- GO SLOWLY AND FOLLOW THE BABY'S LEAD.

**1. TUG OF WAR WITH PINKY, INDEX FINGER, BREAST PACIFIER, OR BOTTLE.** USE ANY OF THESE TO PROVIDE GENTLE TRACTION SO YOUR BABY SUCKS MORE STRONGLY. AFTER YOUR BABY HAS DONE A FEW SUCKS, TURN YOUR FINGER OVER AND MASSAGE THE CENTER OF THE TONGUE (WHICH ENCOURAGES TONGUE "CUPPING" WHERE THE SIDES OF THE TONGUE CURL UP ALONG SIDE YOUR FINGER.

**2. ADDING TRACTION TO THE TONGUE:** LET YOUR BABY SUCK ON YOUR FINGER, WITH THE FINGER PAD ON THEIR PALATE. ONCE THE BABY STARTS SUCKING, TURN YOUR FINGER OVER AND MASSAGE IN A CIRCULAR MOTION FROM THE BACK TO THE FRONT OF THE TONGUE.

WHAT SHOULD WE EXPECT FROM THE EXERCISE: BABY SHOULD BE SHOWING IMPROVED TONGUE EXTENSION, ENOUGH TO LATCH TO THE BREAST BETTER ALTHOUGH IT MIGHT TAKE MANY WEEKS BEFORE THE BABY IS ABLE TO LATCH CONSISTENTLY AND MOM HAS NO PAIN.

**3. ONE OR TWO FINGER CHEWING TECHNIQUE:** SLIDE YOUR 2 PINKY FINGERS OR INDEX FINGER PADS SIMULTANEOUSLY AT THE VERY BACK OF THE UPPER GUM'S TOOTH BEARING SURFACES ON EITHER SIDE AND LET YOUR BABY BITE UP WITH THE LOWER GUM 5 TIMES ON EACH SIDE. WORK UP TO 10 BITES EVENTUALLY.

**4. TONGUE TIP MASSAGE** ENGAGE BABY WITH YOUR VOICED USE YOUR FIRST FINGER TO TAP LIPS. WHEN BABY OPENS, USE FINGER TO MASSAGE TONGUE TIP IN CIRCLES TO WORK ON TONGUE EXTENSION

**5. TONGUE POPS/CLICKING (FOR OLDER BABIES)** MAKE A POPPING/CLICKING OR CLUCKING SOUND WITH YOUR TONGUE SEVERAL TIMES, IN FRONT OF BABY'S FACE. REALLY FOCUS ON CONNECTING YOUR TONGUE WITH THE ROOF OF YOUR MOUTH BEFORE YOU CLICK THE TONGUE. SMILE IN BETWEEN. ASK THEM IF THEY CAN DO IT TOO.