

SECOND NATURE LACTATION

KARISSA BINKLEY, IBCLC

TONGUE MOBILITY EXERCISES

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

TONGUE MOBILITY EXERCISES

LATERALIZATION: WITH THE PAD OF YOUR FINGER, RUB THE FRONT OF THE BABY'S GUM IN A CIRCLE AND WAIT FOR THE BABY'S TONGUE TO TAG YOU. FOLLOW THE BABY'S GUMLINE ON ONE SIDE AT A TIME, WAITING FOR THE TONGUE TO FOLLOW YOUR FINGER TO EACH SIDE.

EXTENSION AND ELEVATION: A.) GENTLY PULL DOWN ON THE SKIN OF THE CHIN AND WAIT FOR THE BABY'S RESPONSE TO SEE IF THE TONGUE TRIES TO ELEVATE (LIFT UP TOWARDS THE ROOF OF THE MOUTH OR PALATE) AND EXTEND (COME OUT OF THE MOUTH BEYOND THE LIPS). B.) LIFT YOUR BABY'S UPPER LIP TOWARDS THEIR NOSE WHICH CAN ALSO COMPEL THEM TO STICK THEIR TONGUE OUT.

TONGUE MASSAGE: THIS IS USEFUL IF YOUR BABY RETRACTS THEIR TONGUE ALL THE TIME AND DOES NOT EXTEND THEIR TONGUE FORWARD. STIMULATE THE BABY'S PHILTRUM SO BABY OPENS THEIR MOUTH AND PLACE YOUR INDEX FINGERPAD ON THE SURFACE OF THE TONGUE, JUST BEHIND THE TIP OF THE TONGUE, AND MAKE SMALL CIRCULAR MOVEMENTS WITH YOUR FINGERTIP WITHOUT LOSING CONTACT WITH THE TONGUE.

WHAT SHOULD WE EXPECT FROM THE EXERCISE ABOVE: YOUR BABY SHOULD IMPROVE THE SHAPE AND EXTENSION OF THE TONGUE AT LEAST SLIGHTLY DURING THIS MASSAGE.

TONGUE HUGGIES: USING YOUR INDEX AND MIDDLE FINGERS, SLIDE YOUR FINGERS TO THE BACK OF THE MOUTH ALONG THE LOWER GUM LINE. USING A SCISSOR LIKE MOTION, GENTLY SQUEEZE THE TONGUE AND PULL FORWARD (ALONG THE SIDES OF THE TONGUE). THIS PROVIDES INPUT TO THE SIDE MUSCLES OF THE TONGUE.

5. TONGUE SIDE PUSHES: USE THE INDEX FINGER, PUSH ON THE SIDE OF THE TONGUE SO IT MOVES AWAY FROM THE GUM. THE TONGUE SHOULD PUSH AGAINST YOUR FINGER. REPEAT X2 AND SWITCH SIDES. THIS HELPS STRENGTHEN THE MUSCLES OF THE SIDES OF THE TONGUE.

VIPER: FIRST AND MIDDLE FINGER FORM A "V" UNDERNEATH THE BABY'S TONGUE PROVIDING A FULCRUM OF RESISTANCE AS YOU REST ON THE FLOOR OF THE MOUTH AT THE BACK, PUSHING THE TONGUE UP.