



# SECOND NATURE LACTATION

KARISSA BINKLEY, IBCLC

## SENSITIVE GAG REFLEX

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

**DESENSITIZING THE PALATE:** IF YOUR BABY HAS A HIGH PALATE, A BUBBLE PALATE OR A CHANNEL PALATE THEN THEY WILL RESIST A DEEP LATCH BECAUSE THE PALATE STIMULATION BY YOUR NIPPLE OR PACIFIER OR BOTTLE NIPPLE MAKES THEM GAG. IN TONGUE TIED BABIES, THIS GAG REFLEX IS MUCH MORE IN THE FRONT OF THE PALATE THAN NORMAL.

WHAT SHOULD WE EXPECT FROM THE EXERCISE BELOW? REPEATED SESSIONS WILL HELP YOUR BABY TOLERATE THE FINGERTIP TOUCHING THEIR PALATE AS LONG AS IT IS NOT FORCEFULLY DONE.

MAKE SURE WHEN YOU TOUCH BABY'S LIPS, WAIT FOR HIM/HER TO OPEN THEIR MOUTH AND INVITE YOU IN. IF YOUR BABY GAGS, GENTLY SQUEEZE THEIR CHEEKS.

**TUMMYTIME!**<sup>™</sup> HAVING YOUR BABY SPEND TIME TUMMY DOWN CAN HELP GRAVITY PULL YOUR BABY'S CHIN FORWARD, WHICH WILL IMPROVE THEIR SUCK AND MAY HELP THEM TO SUCK WITHOUT GAGGING.

**GENTLE PALATE STIMULATION:** PLACE YOUR FINGER IN THE INDENTATION ABOVE UPPER LIP BY TOUCHING IT. WAIT FOR THE BABY TO OPEN THEIR MOUTH. ROTATE YOUR FINGER SO THE PAD SIDE IS UP. PLACE YOUR FINGER ON THE UPPER GUM LINE. PLACE YOUR FINGER BEHIND THE GUM RIDGE. USE FIRM PRESSURE. WIGGLE IT BACK A LITTLE BIT. IF YOUR BABY INSTANTLY GAGS BRING YOUR FINGER FORWARD, MAINTAINING PRESSURE AND SEE IF YOUR BABY CAN RECOVER.

**PAINT A "RAINBOW:"** BEGIN AS ABOVE, EXCEPT WE'RE ROTATING YOUR FINGER IN A SIDE TO SIDE FASHION. APPLY STEADY PRESSURE. EACH TIME YOUR MOVING BACK ADD A NEW COLOR TO THE RAINBOW! TRY TO GET ALL THE COLORS OF THE RAINBOW NAMED!