

# Rub-a-dub bub

## Basics of baby massage

Did you know that you can massage your baby? It may sound strange, but massage has loads of benefits for your little bundle!

**B**aby massage is a wonderful form of touch therapy. It's been practiced for centuries by people who live close to nature, but has recently enjoyed a revival in western society as we increasingly look to our roots for solutions to those problems that technology just can't solve. By massaging your baby, you're opening deep roots of communication that will last forever.

There are wonderful courses and books about baby massage, but for now, this will be enough to get you started!

### Benefits of baby massage

- Soothes and relaxes
- Improves bonding
- Strengthens the immune response by lowering stress hormone levels and improving lymph drainage
- Improves coordination and circulation
- Promotes physical self-awareness
- Improves non-verbal communication skills
- Keeps Baby's skin nourished and supple
- Helps to establish a daily routine

### Massage is particularly therapeutic for babies who were:

- Born via caesarean section or had a traumatic delivery
- In NICU
- Premature

### And for babies who are:

- Often away from their parents
- Colicky
- Restless, or have other sleep problems
- High-need
- Tactile defensive
- Not developing as well as they should
- Very clingy, sensitive or shy

### Things to remember

- Baby should get used to massage gradually;

Mom Roxi and Baby Piya Zowitsky




the smaller the baby, the lighter your stroke should be, but don't tickle.

- Massage should last about half an hour, but shorter sessions are still valuable.
- Don't massage within an hour after feeding.
- One hand should be in contact with Baby at all times.
- Never do a full touch session if Baby has a fever.
- Place a few drops of the massage oil you'd like to use on a patch of Baby's skin. If there are no allergic reactions, it's safe to use that oil.
- *Don't* use essential oils.

### Practicalities

- Remove your rings.
- Make sure there are no distractions, but play soft, soothing music.
- Do the massage on a firm surface, covered with a clean, soft towel.
- Massage oils may stain the carpet or your clothes.
- Make sure the room temperature is warm, but not too hot.
- Use easily absorbed pure oils with a natural odour.
- Keep oils in easy-to-dispense bottles.
- Oil can make Baby slippery, so be careful when picking her up.
- Smile at Baby, talk softly to her, and maintain eye contact.
- Warm the oil between your hands and... there you go!

See page 19 for some wonderful massage moves. 

# 7 Amazing massage moves

Sister Lilian showed loving mom Roxy Zowitzky these easy baby massage moves using B.O.N Liquid Gold Pure Tissue Oil.

- B.O.N Liquid Gold Pure Tissue Oil is safe to use throughout pregnancy and as a massage oil for your baby.
- Spray or shake a little Liquid Gold onto your hands and rub them together to warm them up before massaging Baby.
  - The formulation has more than 85% natural ingredients.
  - It's suitable for sensitive skin.
  - It contains no liquid paraffin, mineral oil, BHT, colourants, retinyl palmitate or animal products.
  - Add a few drops to Baby's bathwater to moisturise dry, flaky skin.



1. Keep one hand on Baby's shoulder and massage around the nipples with flat fingers of your other hand; also rub clockwise around Baby's lower abdomen – this is great for relaxation and easing tummy cramps.



2. Pull Baby's abdominal flesh up toward the navel, using alternate hand strokes – this helps stimulate Baby's sense of touch, and her circulation.



3. Place one hand on Baby's chest, the other on Baby's tummy, and alternate downward strokes – this is deeply soothing.



4. 'Milk' Baby's legs (and arms), using alternating hands and pulling gently from thigh to foot – this helps stimulate muscle strength and is very enjoyable.



5. With one hand over Baby's shoulder, do circular thumb massage alongside her spine with the other hand and then reverse – this is great to stimulate the nerve network from the spinal column, and for before Baby's bedtime.



6. Start with Baby's arms stretched out to the sides at shoulder height, then cross them over her chest by crossing your arms – stretching will tone Baby's muscles and stimulate circulation.



7. Support Baby's foot in one hand and using your thumb, 'walk' all over the soles and sides of her foot – this stimulates key reflexology points and will help to calm Baby down.