



Talk With Me
Early Language Services

Upper River Valley
1-866-423-8800

Baby Massage

Benefits of baby massage

Caring, nurturing touch is very important for a child's development. Baby massage is a great way to relax together while providing this key need. It also:

- Is a great way to develop a strong relationship with your baby
- Promotes bonding and attachment and one-on-one quality time with your baby
- May help to improve sleep (baby's and yours)
- Can help to promote relaxation (baby's and yours)
- Can help with early communication
- May help to relieve gas and colic

Remember that with baby massage, it isn't the strokes that are important, but the touch and interactions between you and your baby.

Fun Songs to Sing

- "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" while massaging baby's back
- "This Little Piggie" while massaging the toes/fingers
- "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star" while massaging the legs/arms with slow, soothing strokes
- "Are You Sleeping" while massaging with slow, soothing strokes



When to massage

Your baby is most ready to interact with you in the quiet alert state. A baby in the quiet alert state is:

- Bright-eyed
- Looks you in the face
- Reaches out to you; smiles
- Makes feeding, cooing and babbling sounds

The quiet alert state is the best time to massage a baby. It is also the best time to play games, sing songs, and read stories with your baby.

We would never massage a sleeping or a crying baby.



What about my toddler or preschool aged child?

Massage can benefit your older child as well!
Here are a few tips to get you started:

- Active crawlers and toddlers may not want to lie down for their massage—adjust accordingly (e.g. massaging arms while they are sitting)
- Adjust for longer limbs! You may have to massage the arm/leg in two sections (e.g. hip to knee, knee to ankle)
- Toddlers/preschoolers can tell you what massage strokes or body parts they like/dislike so be sure to ask and avoid those they dislike
- Privacy now needs to be considered. Ask your child how they are more comfortable and adjust (massage over clothes if needed)
- Have fun! Sing songs while you massage or play games. You could pretend to make a pizza on your child's back (e.g. pretend to knead the dough on their back, sprinkle the cheese, spread the sauce). Strokes can be very simple and don't have to be technical
- You can add scented oils/lotions for preschoolers

What Oil Should I Use?

Oils are used in baby massage to allow your hands to move more smoothly over your baby's skin.

It is recommended that you use organic, food-grade vegetable oil as these allow baby's skin to breathe, are edible, and are unscented. Canola, sunflower and safflower are examples of oils that can be used.



Baby Massage classes

Join us for a 4-week parent/baby massage class.

Learn and practice different strokes each week, participate in discussions and have time to connect with other moms and babies.

Call to find out about the next class near you:

1-866-423-8800