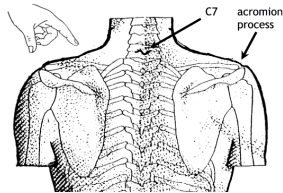


*The primal language of life is Touch.  
The Art of Massage is an ancient tradition of  
health care that is Compassionate, Empowering,  
and Holistic.*

## Mother Massage

- Receiving massage can help mothers relax and better enjoy breastfeeding. The care and attention a mom receives from massage can guide her to openly give more of herself.
- Massage increases the release of oxytocin (the pleasure and bonding hormone) in the brain which supports relaxation and bonding and may decrease anxiety.



- On the upper back is an acupressure point used to promote lactation and letdown. The nerves that serve the breast originate in the upper spine, between the shoulder blades. This area is often where women carry a lot of muscular tension. Massaging the upper back relaxes the shoulders and promotes milk let-down.
- The mom, or a support person, can massage her inner ankle acupressure point at the beginning of a breastfeed to facilitate letdown.



A Registered Massage Therapist (RMT) can:

- rebalance mom's body by relieving tension, tightness and swelling from prolonged nursing, lifting, carrying, slings...etc;
- reduce fatigue, tension, headaches, and postpartum blues by promoting emotional and mental well-being through physical release and relaxation;
- guide a mother through preventative stretching, strengthening exercises and postural support and awareness.

## Breast Massage

- Massaging the breasts can stimulate letdown and expression of milk.
- Breast massage just before breastfeeding increases the fat content of the milk, therefore promoting healthy infant weight gain.
- If you are prone to uncomfortable plugged ducts, while feeding baby, gently massage the breast downward or towards the nipple. This helps to drain the breast, clear plugged ducts and prevent mastitis.



- Using a gentle showerhead to massage the breasts can also prevent and treat a blocked duct.
- Alternating massage with expression significantly reduces the incidence and severity of engorgement.
- Massage relieves engorgement soreness by increasing drainage of lymph nodes and milk ducts, and promoting blood circulation.
- An RMT can demonstrate and teach the technique of self massage and hydrotherapy techniques (when to use heat & ice).

## Infant Massage

- Infant massage can be part of a daily or weekly routine for mom or dad. It promotes relaxation and sleep in baby and can be their "special time".
- Mom can massage her baby's back and feet while she is breastfeeding.
- Skin to skin contact helps the growth and development of the baby and enhances the bonding relationship between baby and mom.



***Breastfeeding mothers and infants have been massaged for millennia; in fact, there are few places in the world where mothers and infants do not receive massage after birth.***



**Customs around the world:**

~ In Japan, women and couples learn breast massage in some hospitals and even receive a certificate for it.

~ In Java, the new mother's body is massaged all over with a rice-flour paste and a root that makes the skin tingle.

~ In Malaysia, a specially trained masseur comes every day to knead the new mother's abdomen.

~ An Arapesh man in New Guinea will massage his wife's body after she's given birth.

~ In Nigeria, women have their breasts vigorously massaged by female relatives in the weeks before and after giving birth.

~ Tribes of India, Africa, Asia, Oceania, North and South America have long histories of women massaging their babies.

~ The Maori of New Zealand bathe and rub their baby's body, wrapping it in soft leaves or cloths and then un-wrapping it again for another massage.

~ People of India & Hawaii believe that a baby's face can be made more beautiful through massage.

~ Aboriginals of Brazil massage a mother after birth to fill her body with oxytocin (pleasure) and prepare her to continue giving love and life to her child.



***It is priceless for mothers to learn how to massage themselves and their children.***



**Resources for parents:**

Infant Massage: A Handbook for Loving Parents by Vimala McClure

[www.lalecheleaguecanada.ca](http://www.lalecheleaguecanada.ca)

[www.lalecheleague.org/bfinfo.html](http://www.lalecheleague.org/bfinfo.html)

The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding by LLL

**created by:**

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# ***MASSAGE for the BREASTFEEDING MOTHER***



***Take a closer look ...***

***at the Benefits of Massage for the  
Breastfeeding Mom and Baby***



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recycled paper ~~**