

Perineal Massage Instructions

Either you or your partner can do the massage. The first few times, take a mirror and look at your perineum, so you know what you are doing. Wash your hands before beginning and make sure your bladder is empty. Position yourself comfortably. It is probably more comfortable to do the massage after a bath, as this will soften the surrounding tissues. You can do the massage in several positions, semi sitting, squatting against a wall, or even standing with one foot raised and resting on the bath or a heavy chair.

- The massage should be done 3 to 4 times a week for a few minutes, beginning six weeks before your baby is due.
- Lubricate your fingers well with almond oil. You need enough to allow your finger to move smoothly over the perineum and lower vaginal wall.
- If you are doing the massage yourself, it is probably easiest to use your thumb. Your partner can more easily use both index fingers.
 1. Place the fingers and thumb about 2 inches into the vagina (up to the second knuckle).
 2. Using a sweeping motion with downward pressure, move in a rhythmic movement from 3 o'clock to 9 o'clock and back again. This movement will stretch the vaginal tissue and the muscles surrounding the vagina.
 3. You can also massage the skin of the perineum between the thumb and the forefingers.
- As you or your partner perform the massage, apply steady pressure downward toward the back passage, until you feel a tingling sensation. This will help you recognise the sensation that you will experience when your baby's head begins to crown.
- Use more oil if required to reduce friction.
- Concentrate on relaxing your pelvic floor muscles as you massage
- In the beginning you may feel tight, but with time and practice the tissues will relax and stretch.
- The massage should not be painful.