

Baby massage

Baby massage helps you to bond with your baby and may help your baby get a good night's sleep. It can also help with common baby problems like colic, constipation and crying.

You will need:

- Some massage oil that is suitable for use on your baby, such as pure olive oil.
- Something soft for your baby to lie on – a changing mat covered with a towel is ideal.

1 Choose a time when your baby is relaxed, such as after an evening bath. Don't massage your baby when they are feeling tired, hungry or upset.

2 Make sure the room is warm – approximately 78°F/24°C.

3 Remove any rings or bracelets and make sure you have warm hands.

4 Undress your baby and lie them on something soft.

5 Get yourself into a comfortable position, and pour a generous amount of oil into your hands. Rub your hands together to warm the oil.

6 Start by gently rubbing and stretching your baby's feet and toes.

7 Work your way up your baby's legs, gently rubbing and squeezing the muscles.

8 Do the same for the arms and hands, and finish by stroking your baby's chest and tummy.

9 Talk to your baby and maintain eye contact as you massage. Don't rub or squeeze too hard, and don't persist if your baby doesn't seem to be enjoying it – not all babies do.

10 Attending a baby massage group will boost your confidence and is a great place to meet other mums – ask your health visitor if there's one available in your area.

