

BREASTFEEDING HEALTH

*Our Beautiful Beginnings
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Breast health

Breast health is just as important for your breastfeeding/pumping journey.



WHAT IS BREAST MASSAGE?

Breast health is not often discussed in America but it is something just as important for your breastfeeding/pumping journey. Babies respond to flow and if there are tightness, stagnation, kinks in the breast, all of those things can affect flow which will affect how baby nurses at the breast.

The term breast massage is actually quite misleading as it's not so much massage but gentle manipulation and draining. It's stretching, draining and expressing. We are trying to get the breast

to optimal health for optimal breastfeeding experience especially early in baby's life. It's really simply trying to mimic what baby does at the breast with our hands.



A close-up photograph of a woman with dark hair looking up at a baby she is holding. The baby is wearing a white t-shirt and blue shorts. The background is a bright, slightly blurred outdoor setting.

THE PUMP IS A GREAT TOOL FOR STIMULATION,

but not the most efficient tool in draining and often can lead to back up and never meeting full capacity since all of the layers are not being properly drained. The baby moves with a rolling motion when at the breast, the therapy can best mimic what the baby does at the breast and help to drain breasts effectively.

For moms who are trying to increase supply the therapy will assist in effectively draining the breast and move stagnation to recruit more milk cells to be able to achieve full capacity of the gland and improve milk flow.

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For moms with babies who have been diagnosed with tongue tie, there is often poor milk removal due to restrictions in tongue mobility and/or poor seal, that can lead to poor drainage and clogs while trying to figure out how to move forward with baby and waiting for baby to get stronger at the breast.

The breast may even have some firm areas from stagnated milk which will prevent efficient flow. Continued poor milk removal can lead to drop in supply if we are not consistently draining the breast especially after 14 weeks when the



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hormones are almost back to pre pregnancy levels. This can often be a problem even for moms with over supply. Babies can learn to compensate with moms oversupply even if they do not have a good latch but as the milk begins to regulate, the poor latch can result in poor milk removal which can lead to drop in supply and slower weight gain.



If you have experienced clogs before, the areas that have clogged can lead to kinks and when not properly maintained will often cause reoccurring issues.

The therapy will help to increase circulation, stretch out the ducts and improve the elasticity of the ducts and areola to help baby to be able to nurse more effectively. Sometimes when there are clogs the flow slows and babies can often get frustrated at the breast if it is not flowing the way they prefer. When the baby has to work vigorously at the breast, they are so smart that they will save their energy and may begin to just suckle and which can lead to poor milk transfer and prolonged feeding sessions.

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For moms with oversupply the massage can be beneficial in helping to control the flow as we are able to work on draining well, stretching the ducts for a smoother/balanced flow.

Proper draining of the breast will also allow baby to experience fresh milk, which often leads to more vigorous feeding for some babies!

The goal of the visit is so you can learn what properly drained breasts can feel like and also learn how to better manage your breast health!

If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to reach out!