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ORAL EXERCISES AFTER FRENOTOMY

These are general instructions for mouth exercises after frenotomy. Your own health care provider may have specific instructions which would be more appropriate to your infant.

- ~ These are meant to be done separately from “stretches” & always in a playful manner.
- ~ Start 2-3 days before the procedure & practice about 2-3 times per day.
- ~ This is may be uncomfortable for infant, use pain relief as directed, especially in first few days after procedure. Always stop if infant resists or cries.
- ~ Begin with a gentle rubbing of the temples & cheeks/jaws muscle & “ask” to come into mouth by tapping on the chin, nose, then outside of upper lip. The infant usually opens the mouth when you put gentle pressure on the chin.
- ~ Slowly rub the gum line with gentle pressure, upper and lower, from side to side, almost as if you are feeling to see if the baby has teeth. The tongue will try to follow your finger.
- ~ Gently stroke the center of tongue from back to front and front to back.
- ~ Put index finger in the length of gum line and let baby “chomp” on it, repeat on both sides.
- ~ Allow infant to suck on your finger & play a gentle tug of war. Then turn the finger over, nail side down and press gently on the tongue to try to get tongue to lift
- ~ Feel the palate (top of the mouth) & “windshield wiper” your finger back and forth. This may cause a gagging, which is normal reflex.
- ~ Gently massage the cheeks, index finger inside the mouth, thumb outside the mouth, from back to front.
- ~ If mouth won’t open wide for exercises or feeding & massage of the face/jaws doesn’t help, try to release tension by applying very gentle touching at the place where the jaws meet, inside of the mouth: repeat on each side.

Not all of these exercises may be helpful to all infants. Please ask for specific instructions from your health care team.