



PEDIATRIC DENTAL
SPECIALISTS OF WEST MICHIGAN
STEPHANIE KLOOSTRA, DDS, MS • KATHRYN SWANSON, DDS

LIP AND TONGUE TIE RELEASE CARE FOR INFANTS

Babies are usually calmed by skin to skin contact and their feedings. Babies generally do well without pain relievers after a frenectomy. Only if your normal soothing methods are not working, do we find it appropriate to give pain medication. Most babies will be fussy within the first 48-72 hours following treatment and comfort will increase with time. Optimal and full healing will take up to two weeks.

Tylenol can be given based on your baby's weight: 6-11 lbs - 1.25 mL, 12-17 lbs - 2.5 mL, 18-23 lbs - 3.75 mL, 24-35 lbs -5 mL. Tylenol should only be given every 4-6 hours to prevent overdose. If your baby has any current diagnosed liver problems, Tylenol should not be taken. Motrin (Ibuprofen) should not be given to a baby under 6 months of age.

Arnica is a holistic alternative to OTC medications. Arnica can be given as needed for pain. Use as directed on packaging.

Some bleeding after the procedure is normal within the first 24-48 hours. Avoid teething toys, objects in the mouth, or hard crunchy foods for 72 hours post-operatively to avoid any trauma to the healing tissue. Also keep baby's fingers and hands out of the oral cavity to aid in optimal healing. If bleeding continues, please contact our office.

The main risk of any frenectomy procedure is reattachment because the mouth heals very quickly. Quick oral healing is normally a great thing, but in this situation, it may cause partial reattachment of your baby's tie release at the fold of either their lip or tongue site. This may cause persistence, a return or worsening of some of the tie's symptoms.

To minimize this undesired healing, the newly freed fold in the diamond release areas will need to be kept separated/open using very gentle lifts of the lip and tongue and additional finger sweep stretches of the newly created diamond shaped areas as demonstrated by your provider. These stretches should be done at a minimum every 6 hours during the 2 weeks following treatment to prevent reattachment of the tissue. If your baby sleeps longer than this period, you do not need to wake them but perform the stretches upon waking.

The LIFT of the lip and tongue needs to be high enough to see that the fold of the diamond is gently spread. The lift of the lip should occlude both nostrils. The lift of the tongue should be with solid counter pressure on the floor of the mouth so the wound site is visible when doing the stretch. The diamond shape wound should appear longer than it is wide when doing the stretch. You can also gently pull the chin down to see the spread of the diamond under the tongue.

In addition to lifts and sweeps, it is important to encourage tongue movement to increase the underdeveloped oral strength. Your baby now has increased ability to elevate their tongue, move it from left to right, and extension (sticking the tongue out). These are the movements that need to be exercised and developed.

Gentle stroking of the hard palate (the roof of the mouth) will encourage the tongue to elevate. Strokes of the gum lines to the left and right side should cause the tongue to follow in those two directions. The tongue will elevate/extend when sucking on a Soothie-type pacifier, finger, or bottle nipple if you gently pull it out of their mouth. These exercises should be done 2x daily starting 48 hours after the procedure (while stretches should be done immediately following treatment).

Your child may need additional care from other providers after treatment. Drs. Katie and Stephanie will have recommendations based on your child's specific needs. These providers may include an IBCLC, occupational therapist, myofunctional therapist, speech pathologist, craniosacral therapist, and/or chiropractor.

For further instructions on how to do the stretches and exercises you can follow these links:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hw6Z1UBDNEk>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N3UHtej-ozc>

Please do not hesitate to contact our office with any questions or concerns 616-608-8898. Our on call phone line is available until 9:00 PM. After 9 PM, please leave a message, and we will get back to you as soon as possible. You will not be charged for calling our emergency line. If you feel there is an emergency, please call or go to the emergency room.