

# POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR INFANT TONGUE-TIE RELEASE

## Healing & Preventing Reattachment

The mouth heals quickly, which may cause the tongue or lip sites to reattach too early, leading to reduced mobility and symptom recurrence. To prevent this, follow the stretching exercises below.

- Perform stretches with your baby sitting on your lap or lying on a bed, feet pointing away from you. Swaddle the baby's arms to prevent interference.
- Stretches should be **gentle, firm, and brief** (5-10 seconds) with quick, precise movements.
- **Begin stretches within 3-6 hours** post-procedure using **gloves (preferred) or clean hands with trimmed nails**.
- Follow-up **within 7 days** in person (recommended) or virtually.

## Stretching Routine

- **Frequency:** Minimum **4-6 times daily for 4 weeks**. Stretching before each feeding may help calm your baby after the stretching is complete.
- **Goal:** Open and visualize the “diamond” shape on the lip and tongue. If it becomes tight, stretch/push slightly more to reopen.
- **Alternative for Virtual Follow-Up:** If an in-person visit isn't possible, perform a deeper stretch once on day 7 by pushing twice as hard. Slight bleeding indicates minor reattachment, which can be reopened. Apply pressure with gauze or a paper towel for **4-5 minutes** to stop bleeding.
- **Tummy Time & Exercises:** Watch Michelle Emanuel's YouTube channel for tummy time and guppy exercises.

## Healing Process

- The released area will develop a **wet scab**, appearing white, yellow, or green. This is **not an infection** but a normal healing process.
- The scab will shrink daily, but **stretching must continue** to prevent reattachment.

## Feeding & Therapy Support

- **It is important to maintain your baby's hydration after treatment!** Monitor wet diapers and if necessary, bottle or syringe feed to make sure baby stays hydrated.
- **Breastfeeding:** Follow up with a **lactation consultant is required!**
- **Bottle-Feeding:** A **feeding therapist** or **lactation consultant**
- **Other Support:** Occupational therapy (OT), physical therapy (PT), craniosacral therapy (CST), or bodywork may help babies improve strength, suction, mobility, and overall wellness.
- Expect gradual improvement in feeding: **One better feed per day** (e.g., two better feeds on the second day, etc.). Some babies improve immediately, while others take days to weeks.
- Use **skin-to-skin contact, warm baths, and soothing music** to calm your baby.

## Post-Procedure Expectations

- **Bleeding:** Slight spotting is normal in the first few days.
- **Swelling:** The lip may swell slightly for a few days.
- **Healing Appearance:** White/yellow scabbing is normal; it does not indicate infection.
- **Concerns:** Contact our office (see contact information below!)

## Pain Management

- **Children's Tylenol (Genexa organic option) 160mg/5mL:** Administer **every 4-6 hours for 2-3 days** based on weight.
  - 6lbs give 40mg or 1.25mL                      7lb give 1.5mL                      8lb give 1.75mL
  - 9lb give 2mL    10lb give 2.25mL                      11lb give 2.25mL
  - 12-14lb give 80mg or 2.5mL                      15-17lb give 3mL                      18-23lbs give 3.75mL
  - 24lbs+ give 5mL
- **FOR CHILDREN OVER 6 MONTHS ONLY: Infant's Motrin (ibuprofen):** Administer **every 4-6 hours for 2-3 days** based on weight.
  - **12-17 lbs:** 1.25mL (50mg)
  - **18+ lbs:** 1.875mL
- If your baby refuses to nurse or seems in pain, check the Tylenol dose and try bottle, syringe, or cup feeding. **Coconut oil** or **Breastmilk ice chips** can also be soothing.
- **Discomfort usually lasts 36-48 hours**, at latest **one week** and appearing nearly normal by **2-3 week**.

## Stretching Techniques

**Demonstration Video:** [Dr. Amar's video](#) will be sent to you via text message

### Upper Lip Stretch

- Start with the **lip stretch first**
- Insert a finger on each side at the corners of the mouth, move towards the center and **lift lip upwards until resistance**. The lip should cover the nostrils when fully stretched!
- Sweep side to side for **1 second** to prevent reattachment.

### Tongue Stretch

- Place **both index fingers** underneath the tongue **as close to the apex (top) of the diamond**.
- **Hand Positioning:** Thumbs on the forehead, middle fingers on the chin.
- **Vertical Stretch:** Lift tongue towards the roof of the mouth for **~3-5 seconds (put pressure towards tonsils)**.
- **Side-to-Side Stretch:** Sweep up from the bottom of the diamond wound.
- **You must be able to visualize the entire diamond** in order to do a proper stretch!

## Sucking Exercises

These exercises prevent negative associations with stretches and strengthen tongue movement:

- **Lateral Tongue Movement:** Rub baby's lower gumline side to side to encourage tongue motion.
- **Suck-and-Tug:** Let baby suck on your finger, then slowly pull it out while they resist.
- **Pressure Against Palate:** While baby sucks your finger, gently press against the roof of their mouth to improve coordination.
- **Cheek Massage:** Place a finger inside the baby's cheek and massage from the outside.

## Contact Information

- **Office:** 215-874-3787 or [info@phillytonguetie.com](mailto:info@phillytonguetie.com)
- **Urgent After-Hours:** Text Dr. Amar at 267-580-9837
- **Medical Emergency:** 911