

Pain and Discomfort After Treatment

- The site feels like a burn in the mouth and can be uncomfortable
- There can be slight swelling in the first few days. This is normal.
- Breastfeeding and skin to skin contact provide natural pain relief. Take a bath with baby! Consider a "nursing vacation." Your baby may need something additional for pain if they seem particularly fussy or refuse to feed in the first 24-48 hours. Acetaminophen (Tylenol) and homeopathics (Arnica) are both effective forms of pain relief.
 - NOTE– dosages are based on weight, not age. NEVER use Ora-gel or Ambesol due to health risks and NEVER give ibuprofen to an infant under 6 months of age.
- If breastfeeding or pumping: you can take some frozen breast milk and smash it into small pieces and place in site of wound for relief.

Pain Relief Dosages

- Tylenol - _____ mL every 4-6 hours, as needed.
- Arnica Gel (found at the local co-op or amazon) for external use only: rub under chin and on upper lip up to 3x/day.

Stretches

- A small amount of spotting or bleeding is common after the procedure, especially in the first few days. You may even notice some in baby's stools. Again, this is normal.
- Wash your hands well – gloves are not necessary but can be used if you wish.
- Apply a small amount of coconut oil or olive oil prior to stretches and sweeping.
- Sweep your finger over sites with a small amount of firm pressure to make sure you are breaking any re-attached fibers.
- Carry out stretches before a feed as breastfeeding will provide comfort and reward if it is uncomfortable. The first few days do this often! At least every 2 hours. After day 4, you can reduce to 5x/day until you see us for your 1 week check.
- The exercises should last 15-30 seconds each.
- One of the most important things to understand after a release is that ***improvement is rarely immediate*** – the release is usually just the first step and your baby will need time to figure out the new mobility of their tongue.

Healing

- There may be a few days after the procedure of little to no improvement, there may even be a little regression as your child's brain sorts out how to use their tongue now that it is no longer restricted. **Don't get discouraged**, keep trying and reach out to your lactation consultant. They will be your best resource.
- Healing takes time, most of the re-attachment will happen in the first week. A scab will form in a "diamond shape" and look like a hole in the beginning. This will change in a few days to a white/yellow color.
- The site can appear infected but this is the normal healing process for a scab in the mouth.



(Photo: 5 days post op)

- It can bleed slightly when touched during the stretches and sweeps. You are helping with healing. Please keep doing the sweeps and stretches. It will not harm the site.

Sucking Exercises

- Sometimes babies have disorganized or weak sucking patterns that can benefit from exercises. The following exercises are simple and can be done to improve suck quality. Start these the day of procedure and spend 30-45 seconds on each exercise throughout the day.
 - Slowly rub the lower gum line from side to side and your baby's tongue will follow your finger. This will help strengthen the lateral movements of the tongue.
 - Let your child suck on your finger and to a tug-of-war, slowly trying to pull your finger out while they try to suck in back in. This strengthens the tongue itself.
 - Let your child suck on your finger, once they start to suck press down with the back of your nail into the tongue. This usually interrupts the sucking motion while the baby pushes back against you. Listen for the seal to break, then put your finger back up to the palate to re-stimulate sucking. This strengthens the tongue and suck.
 - With the index finger inside the baby's cheek, use your thumb outside the cheek to massage the cheeks on either side. This helps lessen the tension.

Body Work

- Gentle body work such as chiropractic or craniosacral therapy is an important part of the process of treating the lip and tongue tie. The type of bodywork matters less than the skill of the practitioner. It's VERY important to find someone who is qualified and experienced working with babies. The body work helps the child's body release the adaptations that have formed while sucking with the restricted tongue function and helps to speed up the process of the child figuring out how to suck effectively.
 - In our area two recommended practitioners are:
 - **Dr. Erica Boland, Coulee Health**
 - 920 Highway 16, West Salem, WI 54669
 - 608-612-0777
 - <https://couleehealth.com>
 - **Dr. Kasey Payne, Connected Family Chiropractic**
 - 306 Main Street, Suite #101, La Crescent, MN 55947
 - 507-895-8100
 - <https://connectedfamchiro.com>

Please do not hesitate to call our office if you have any questions or concerns about your child, we are happy to help with any concerns you have.

References:

- <https://drghaheri.squarespace.com/aftercare>
- Tongue Tie Clinic, Netherlands – PDF
- <https://nurturedchild.ca/index.php/breastfeeding/challenges/what-to-expect-after-tongue-tie-and-lip-tie-release>