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Making the decision to have a child - it's momentous. It is to decide forever to have your heart go walking outside your body. ~Elizabeth Stone

Home Care Instructions for Parents

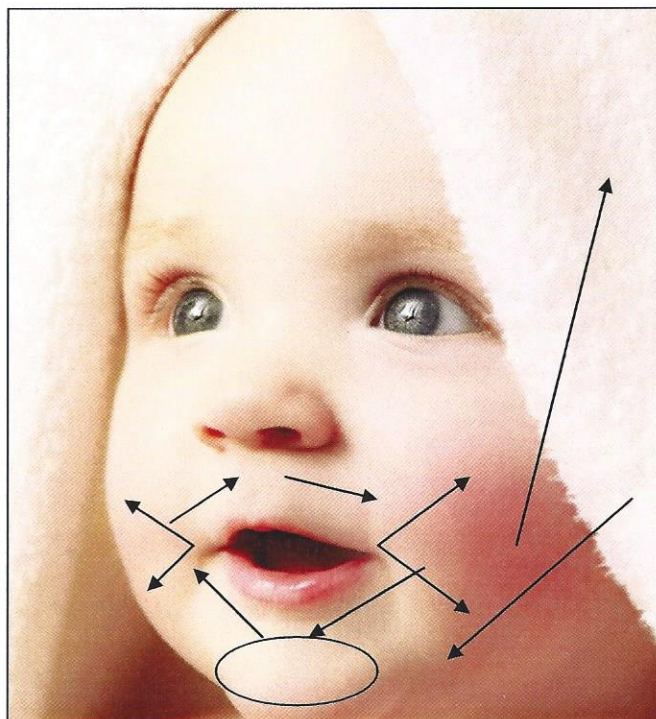
Jaw & Tongue

Try to do these steps with each feeding (prepare him to eat by massaging his muscles; if she/he's already starving, you may not want to try this now, but while she/he's nursing, if you have a free hand, you could work on the side of the face that you can see while she/he nurses).

You may also want to mix it up so that you are not upsetting her/him or distressing her/him so much she/he can't eat, but for example, if she/he needs to be woken up, try working inside her/his mouth until she/he wakes up because he/she is a little uncomfortable.

1. Pressure – use just enough pressure to blanch (whiten) your skin running your finger along the back of your hand.
2. fingertip circles under the jaw on both sides – always going from back to front.
3. fingertip circles of the full cheek to temple on both sides
4. fingertip circles of the muscles around the mouth (and muscles that make you smile and muscles that make you frown) and around the chin.

Insert your pinky between the upper and lower gum on both sides and allow him/her to work his jaw around your fingers to stretch the muscles in the back of the mouth (the muscles that deviate the jaw right and left and pull it back in)



Releasing the sublingual frenulum (stretching under the tongue):

slide smallest finger along inside of gum and under the tongue. Feel the floor of the mouth moving until you feel the root of the tongue under the tip of the finger and the middle column of tissue restricting the side of your finger in the midline. Just hold your finger there and let her/him stretch her/his tongue trying to push you out of her/his mouth. Do each side for 30-45 seconds.

Releasing the labial frenulum (stretching under the lips):

Small fingertip run between the upper lip and gum from right to left and back to right to release the upper lip and stretch