Massage Stroking Sequence
Loving Touch® Parent - Infant Massage Program

Legs & Feet

1. INDIAN MILKING ~ of the whole leg from the upper thigh to ankle ~

*Gliding*: Away from the heart. Use the entire palmar surface of the hands. Make the hand like the letter “C” and with the thumbs facing downward wrap the fingers around the leg and glide outward in long sweeping strokes towards the foot.

2. TURN AND CARESS ~ hands side-by-side

*Wringing*: With both hands turning opposite to each other, work your way from the thigh up to the ankle and off the foot. Do not torque the knee joint.

3. FANNING ~ on the bottom of the foot ~

*Gliding and Circular Friction*: Fanning out stroke with the thumbs. Thumb-over-thumb smooth the wrinkles out of the bottom of the foot. Spread the toes open.

4. ROLL EACH TOE

*Petrissage*: As if you had a small pea in between your finger and thumb, gently squeeze each toe and give a little pull. This is a good time to introduce a nursery rhyme, like “this little piggy went to the market”.

5. PRESSURE POINT THUMB WALK ~ all over the bottom of the foot

*Reflexology*: Imagine five lines running up the heel of the foot to the toes. Walk thumbs up the bottom of feet to include the surface under the toes. To get the toes to open, kiss the tops of the toes, wait a second or two and then you can reach that area.

6. AIRPLANE RUNWAY ~ glide palm of hand off foot

*Gliding*: With the palm of your hand glide and stroke up and over the sole of the foot and off the toes, while you wiggle your fingers and watch baby’s reaction.

7. GENTLE STRETCHING OF THE FOOT ~

*Joint movements*: Cup your hand around the foot and place your thumb in the center sole of the foot. Next, flex and extend the foot. Gently rotate ankle in a circle. Place your other hand in a supporting position on the leg and give a gentle stretch.

8. TOP OF FOOT AND THE ANKLES ~ finger pads

*Gliding strokes*: Move upward on the top of the foot between the small bones towards the ankle and make small circular friction movements around the ankle joint.

**NOTE**: Up until now, the massage stroking movements have all been downward and away from the heart, the “Indian massage” direction and philosophy for tension relief, now the movements are reversing and moving up the extremities towards the heart, “Swedish technique,” for circulation.

9. SWEDISH MILKING ~ of the whole leg from ankle to thigh ~

*Effleurage*: Move up the leg towards the heart in long alternating sweeping strokes. This will encourage blood flow back to the heart. Additionally improves lymphatic drainage. Note: Top of the thigh area is where the inguinal lymph nodes are located.
10. ROLLING THE LEG ~
Friction: From the ankle to thigh or the thigh to the ankle. Imagine you had a piece of “playdough” in your hand and you were making a playdough rope. Press your palms together and squeeze the muscle against the bone for improved circulation. For a toddler, this technique can be done by propping their foot against your shoulder and rolling the thigh.

11. NERVE STROKE OR FEATHER STROKE ~
Effleurage: This is an aura stroke, very light and superficial. From the thigh downward gently stroke ever so lightly as to say, “all done.” It is interesting to note, that this is the way the hair lays on the skin.

12. CONDITIONED RELAXATION RESPONSE - (CRR) ~
A gentle tapping and a “JIGGLE” of extremity to let go. Give infant a verbal cue to relax so they begin to identify the verbal cue and the tone of their muscle.

Tummy
(Massage on an empty stomach, if possible)

1. HANDS UNDER THE SACRUM ~
Joint Movement and Rocking: Cup the sacrum and buttocks in your hands, begin by gently rocking the lower extremities in a supportive manner. This loosens the abdominal muscles. Move one hand to the abdomen (like you are sandwiching your hands between the front and back) before preceeding to the paddling stroke.

2. PADDLING DOWNWARD ~
Petrissage: Placing the palms of your hands on the baby’s abdomen make scooping strokes downward stopping above the pubic area. This resembles a water wheel going round and round. Note: Placement of hands is below the sternum. No pressure should be applied to the xyphoid process.

3. FULLING ~
Kneading: With thumbs together above the belly button in a midline position, but below the rib cage, gently pull outward to baby’s sides. Make two rows of strokes above the belly button, one equal with, and two below ending above the pubic area. Note: If the umbilical cord is still intact, go around it with your fingerpads.

4. HANDS OF A CLOCK ~
Petrissage: Moving in a clockwise direction, around the abdomen in a circle, one hand follows the other. This stroke outlines the direction of the intestinal tract. Stroke up the ascending colon, across the transverse and down the descending colon. One hand follows the other in a smooth continuous movement. A newborn’s abdomen may be an area of holding tension. Don't be surprised if your baby cries or gets uncomfortable. Be sensitive to this area and provide baby with a lot of support.
5. **I LOVE YOU PETRISSAGE ~**

PetriSSage: Drawing the initials of the letter “I” down the descending colon, say “I.” Secondly, draw an upside down “L” across the transverse and down the descending colon, and say “Love.” Finish with drawing an upside down letter “U” up the ascending, across the transverse and down the descending colon, saying “You.” Put it all together and you say “I Love you!” (McClure, “Infant Massage Handbook for Loving Parents”)

6. **RAINBOW FINGERS WALKING ACROSS THE TUMMY ~**

**Fulling:** From the babies right to left, walk your fingers in a “Rainbow Arch” fashion in several rows horizontally across the tummy. Avoid tickling. One walk above the belly button, one equal and one below. If it appears that your baby is gassy or has constipation, repeat the strokes for the tummy several times a day, or the colic routine. Include the knee to the tummy press. It is advisable to massage on an empty stomach. Use an elevated position if the child has been diagnosed with Gastroesophageal reflux.

7. **KNEE TO TUMMY PUSH ~**

**Passive Joint Movement:** Placing your hands on the infants lateral thighs, including cupping the sides of the knees, gently push as a unit toward the tummy and hold for 3-5 seconds. Release and repeat movement. Note: Avoid placing fingers behind the knees when pushing forward as this is a very sensitive area.

8. **ROCKING TUMMY ~**

**Centering balance:** Place palm of hand flat on tummy in a horizontal position and gently rock from side to side, or one hand may be placed under the back. Containment or stilling of the hands is also beneficial.

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**Chest**

1. **HELLO STROKE ~** in an outward movement ~

**Effleurage:** Begin by placing the palmar surface of your hands on the center of your baby’s sternum, allow them to mold to your baby’s chest and smooth outward like your are smoothly the pages of a book. This may include stretching out of the arms and dropping down on the sides of the chest or rib area.

2. **HEART OF LOVE ~**

**Effleurage:** Stroking up the sternum around the top of the chest and down in a heart shape movement being careful of the xiphoid process. The pads of the fingers may extend over the tops of the shoulders and around the sides of the ribs. Repeat this movement several times. Note: Pay attention to your breathing and the child’s breathing.

3. **BUTTERFLY OR CROSS THE HEART ~**

**Effleurage:** Stroke begins on top of the hip. Alternately gliding with the palmar surface of the hands upward to the opposite shoulder. Glide one hand all the way up and down before gliding the opposite hand up and down. This should be done in a very rhythmic way, flowing from the base of your spine in almost a rocking movement. Note: Pay attention to your breathing and the child’s breathing.
Massage Stroking Sequence
Loving Touch® Parent - Infant Massage Program
Arms & Hands

1. CONDITIONED RELAXATION RESPONSE - (CRR) ~
Begin by holding your baby’s arm in your hand and gently pat, tap or jiggle the back side of the arm to encourage the arm to release and extend. Give infant a verbal cue to relax so they begin to identify the verbal cue with the tone of muscle.

2. AXILLA AREA ~ small circles in arm pit.
Circular Friction: Gently with the pads of fingers make small circles in the arm pit region. Do not poke or tickle. Encourages lymphatic drainage. Note: This is the axillary node area.

3. INDIAN MILKING ~ from shoulder to the wrist
Gliding: Away from the heart. Use the entire palmar surface of the hands. Make the hand like the letter “C” and with the thumbs facing downward wrap the fingers around the arm and glide outward in long sweeping strokes towards the hand.

4. TURN AND CARESS ~ hands side by side
Wringing: With both hands turning opposite to each other, work your way from the shoulder to wrist and off the hand.

5. OPEN THE PALM OF THE HAND ~ open the palm of the hand
Gliding: Stroke upward on the top of the hand towards the wrist and make small circular friction around the wrist joint.

6. ROLL EACH FINGER ~
Petrissage: With finger pads move up and down on each finger like the toes, gently move each finger around its axis and give a little pull. Kiss your baby’s fingers and play a little game, or recite a nursery rhyme, like “Family Fingers”.

7. TOPS OF HANDS AND WRISTS ~ finger tips
Gliding: Stroke upward on the top of the hand towards the wrist and make small circular friction around the wrist joint.

8. SWEDISH MILKING ~ from wrist to shoulder ~
Effleurage: Up the arm towards the heart in long alternating sweeping strokes to encourage blood flow back to the heart. The lateral stroking hand may sweep around the top of the shoulder. Use the full palmar surface of the hand.

9. ROLLING ~ from shoulder to wrist
Friction: Press your palms together around the arm and gently squeeze the muscle against the bone for improved circulation. In a toddler, this technique can be done by placing them on their side as well. Imagine you had a piece of “playdough” in your hand and you were making a playdough rope.

10. NERVE STROKE OR FEATHER STROKE ~
Effleurage: This is an aura stroke, very light, very superficial. From the shoulder outward gently stroke ever so lightly as to say, “all done.” It is interesting to note, that this is the way the hair lays on the skin.
Massage Stroking Sequence
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Face

1. CRADLING BABY’S HEAD IN YOUR HANDS ~
   *Caressing Hold*: With the palmar surface of the hands cup your baby’s head in your hands. Continue to seek permission and make good eye contact. Gently make small circles on the scalp, being careful of the soft cranial areas. Note: the face may be very sensitive and an area of tension. If your baby doesn’t like it at first come back later.

2. FLAT OF THE THUMBS ON FOREHEAD ~
   *Gliding*: Place the thumbs together on the midline of the forehead and stroke outward toward the temple area. Make several outward strokes. Or you may cross over the midline with each thumb and glide outward toward the temple area.

3. EYES ~ from the tear ducts across the eyelids ~
   *Gliding*: Glide finger pads across the eyes laterally to close. With fingerpads apply gentle circular friction in the tear duct area of the eye at top of nose. This is a good opportunity for engagement and “peek-a-boo games.”

4. CHEEKS ~ midline across the cheeks
   *Gliding*: From the bridge of the nose glide in an outward/upward lateral direction towards the temples. Continue to glide over the entire cheek area. At the base of the nostrils make several circular friction movements with your finger tips.

5. SMILE FACE ~ upper and lower lips
   *Gliding*: Move outward towards the temples and make a smile on your baby’s face. This stroke is contraindicated for Down’s syndrome, cleft palate and feeding problems in infants. Strokes may be administered in the opposite direction. Rooting reflex may be triggered due to the touching of the cheeks. Do bilateral massage.

6. CHIN ~
   *Small circular friction*: Around the jaw line and under the chin. Note: This is the cervical node area.

7. EARS AND NECK ~
   *Small circular friction*: Knead the ears between your fingers and thumb. Effleurage around the back of the ear area and neck.

8. SMALL CIRCLES ON THE SCALP ~
   *Small circular friction*: The pressure is deep enough to feel the skin move over the bony cranium, but soft enough to be pleasurable.

   Caution: Do not apply direct pressure in the fontanelle spaces.

   Fantanel (Fontanelle) - A soft spot; one of the membrane-covered spaces remaining at the junction of the sutures in the incompletely ossified skull of the infant.
1. **EFFLEURAGE** ~from shoulders to buttocks

*Gliding*: With the palmar surface of the hands move down the back towards the buttocks. Repeat movement.

2. **STREAMING ALTERNATELY** ~

*Friction - Wringing*: With both hands wring across the back alternately from the top of the spine to the tail bone. It is as if you are pulling the circulation up and over the spine. Do not press directly on the spine.

3. **SWEETING THE BACK** ~ motion from the top of the shoulders to the buttocks

*Effleurage*: Place one hand grasping the buttocks with your fingers and thumb while the other hand flattens and glides down the back over the top of your base hand. The lower hand supports the base of the spine.

4. **CIRCLES ALONG THE SPINE** ~

*Small Circular Friction*: With the pads of the fingers, make circular strokes along the spine, on one side and then the other side from neck to buttocks.

5. **PETRISSAGE** ~ Larger circles

*Kneading*: Circular kneading over the larger areas of the back from tops of shoulders and over the gluteals.

6. **SWEETING FROM HEAD -TO -TOE** ~

*Effleurage*: In a full sweep from head to heels stretch out your baby’s legs. Stroke from head to heels. Close massage movements with effleurage strokes.

7. **COMING THE BACK** ~

*Vibration*: Make your hands like a rake and gently vibrate and comb your fingers from the back of the neck to the gluteals, decreasing pressure. Repeat. End with rocking, containment, or stilling.

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**Stretching Exercises & Baby Yoga**

At this time you may continue to do gentle passive stretching of the arms and legs. Your infant may be dressed for exercises.

1. **HUG-A-BABY** ~

*Joint Movements*: Right arm, left arm, hug myself. Stretch the arms across the chest and gently press into your baby’s body.

2. **ALTERNATE LEG AND ARM STRETCH** ~

*Joint Movements*: Take the right hand and touch it to the left foot in the midline and wait until the baby sees the connection. Repeat several times on the each side

3. **TUMMY KNEE PRESS** ~

*Joint Movements*: Press the knees in the tummy and hold around 3- 5 seconds.

4. **END BY SNUGGLING** ~

Simply wrap your baby snuggly and place in a rocking positon. Thank your baby. This lets your baby know you are finished. The art of massage is a special touching we do with our babies, not to our babies. It is a reciprocal interactive form of communication. It should be done only as long as the infant is interested.
Massage Songs & Nursery Rhymes
(Sing these songs to your baby as you massage)
Loving Touch® Parent - Infant Massage Program

Toes:
“This Little Piggy”
This little piggy went to market
This little piggy stayed home
This little piggy had roast beef (pizza, vegeburger, brownies)
This little piggy had none
And...this little piggy went Wee, Wee, Wee, all the way home!
(use different food words)

Fingers:
“Family fingers”
This is the father, short and stout,
This is the mother with children all about
This is the brother, tall you see,
This is the sister with dolly on her knee,
This is the baby, sure to grow,
And here is the family, all in a row!
(Point to each finger in turn, starting with the thumb)
(Gently grasp baby’s whole hand when done)

Tummy:
Around the Garden goes the teddy bear, one step, two step, love you under there.
(move the hands in the “hands of the clock” movement while reciting the nursery rhyme).
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**Hands and Feet:**

“Clap, Clap Song”
I take my little hands and go Clap, Clap, Clap
I take my little hands and go Clap, Clap, Clap
I take my little hands and go Clap, Clap, Clap
Clap, Clap all day long!
(repeat with, I take my little Foot and go Tap, Tap, Tap, &
I take my little hands and go Bye, Bye, Bye)

**Body:**

“Hinges Song”
I’m all made out of hinges and everything bends, (bend body forward and back)
From the top of my head, way down to the end. (bring hands to head and then to feet)
I’m hinges in front and I’m hinges in back,
If I didn’t have hinges I surely would CRACK! (Clap hands together)

**Wheels of the Bus:**

Sit or lay baby in front of you. Move arms and legs to singing.
Doors on the bus go “open and shut”, Wipers on the bus go Swish, Swish, Swish,
“Wheels on the bus go round and round”, “horn on the bus goes Beep, Beep, Beep.

**Row Row Row Your Boat:**

When doing the rolling movements on arms or legs sing this song!

**Music Suggestions:**

Music for Dreaming CD’s (1, II, III) or Baby-Go-to-Sleep Nursery Rhymes CD’s (1, 2, 3)