

Do not massage if you have a vaginal infection such as thrush or herpes, or if you think your waters might have broken.

Remember, if you have concerns, contact your LMC.

Te Whatu Ora
Health New Zealand
Te Toka Tumai Auckland

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Te Whatu Ora
Health New Zealand

Perineal Massage

What is the perineum?

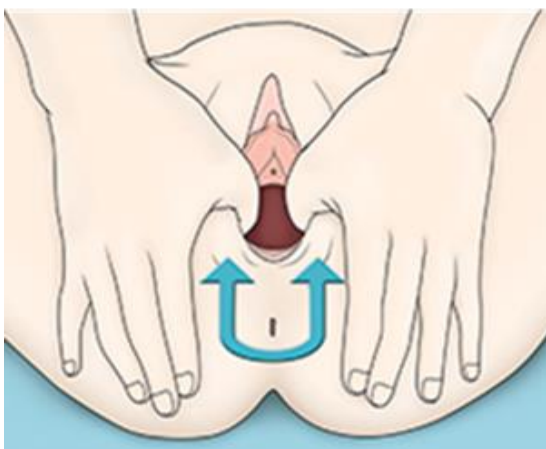
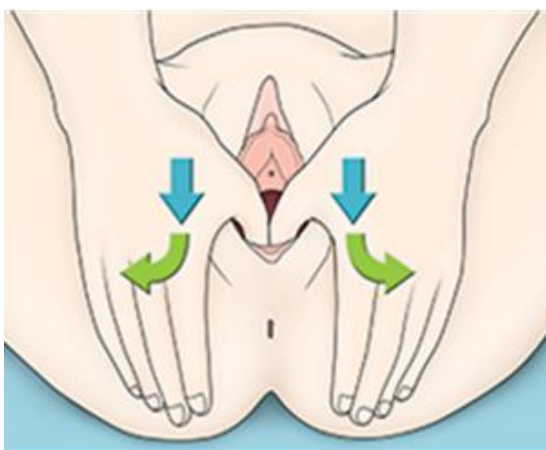
The perineum is the area between your vagina and anus that stretches when you give birth.

What is perineal massage for?

Regular perineal massage in pregnancy:

- Prepares this area to stretch more easily
- Can reduce the chance of having a tear or an episiotomy (surgical cut)
- Can reduce pain after birth
- It is best done after a warm bath or shower.

From 35 weeks of pregnancy start to massage for 5 minutes, two or three times a week.



What to do

1. Empty your bladder and wash your hands
2. Find a quiet warm place where you feel relaxed
3. Either sit comfortably supported with pillows with your knees bent, sit on the toilet, or stand with one foot raised on a stool. Your partner can help if you prefer
4. Focus on relaxing your perineum. Using a mirror can help
5. Apply oil to your thumbs and perineum. Massage with a natural oil such as olive or sweet almond
6. Place one or both thumbs into your vagina
7. Massage first in a downwards motion, then outwards and upwards in a 'U' shaped movement
8. Apply enough pressure so that a light stretching sensation is felt (it should not be painful)
9. Continue massaging for around 5 minutes.