



# Perineal Massage

## Preparing your body for birth

The perineum is the area between your vagina and anus that needs to stretch when you give birth. Regular perineal massage in pregnancy makes this area more supple and can reduce tearing and perineal pain after birth.

From 34 weeks pregnant start a 5 minute massage session every other day. It is best done after a warm bath or shower.

### What to do

- Empty your bladder and wash your hands
- Find a quiet warm place where you feel relaxed
- Sit comfortably supported with pillows
- Your partner can help if you prefer
- Using a mirror can help you see your perineum
- Massage with natural oil such as olive or sweet almond oil
- Apply oil to your thumbs and perineum
- Place one or both thumbs into your vagina
- Massage first in a downwards motion, then outwards and upwards in a 'U' shaped movement
- Apply pressure so that a slight stretching sensation is felt
- Continue massaging for around 5 minutes

**Do not massage if you have a vaginal infection such as thrush or herpes.**

