



Back Massage

Back massages are an important part of relaxation and a child often finds the deep pressure soothing and calming. A back massage increases body awareness, improves circulation and stimulates lymphatic drainage for the release of toxins. The massage can be done over clothing (without cream or lotion), whichever you and your child feel comfortable with.

Equipment needed

A cushion for the head (optional), 2 large towels, cream or lotion, (ensure your child is not allergic to these)

NB. Remove all rings from your fingers, ensure your nails aren't sharp and that your hands are clean and warm.

Method

Find a comfortable warm space and place the towel for the child to lie, head supported by the cushion. Sit beside your child (make sure you're in a good position for your back).

NB. Use a gentle but firm pressure when you massage as light soft touches can be ticklish.

- If using cream or lotion pour into your hands first to warm slightly before applying to whole of back.
- Place flat hands on the lower back either side of the spine, move both hands upwards towards the shoulders, circle around and return hands to lower back. Hands should maintain contact with the back throughout the massage. Continue this smooth rhythmic stroking, covering the whole of the back for 10 minutes.
- Use the heel of the hand make small circular movements from lower back to neck area either side of the spine.
- Using four fingers together make circular movements over shoulder area.
- Reach across the hip with one hand while the other hand rests on the near hip. With one fluid motion pull one hand towards you, while the other pushes away. The hands should slide across the back in opposite directions. Repeat the action until you reach the shoulders.
- Using fingers massage the top of the shoulders and neck. This needs to be a firm and gentle movement otherwise it will feel tickly.
- Cup the shoulders with hand and squeeze.
- Finally make 5 sweeping gentle strokes up and down the whole of the back.
- Place towel over back and encourage to 'still' for a few minutes.
- Finish with a drink of water to help eliminate toxins.

When massaging always use firmer pressure on upward strokes (direction of blood flow) lighter movements on the downwards stroke.

Make sure you massage the muscles either side of the spine, not directly on the spine itself.

At all times watch your child's face for any indication of pain, if so stop.

