

Frenulotomy – post procedure advice sheet

Maternity

Patient Information Leaflet

Introduction

This leaflet will provide advice on the care of your baby following a frenulotomy (a procedure that separates a baby's tongue tie). You will already have been given a separate leaflet on tongue tie and the frenulotomy procedure.

What happens after a frenulotomy has been performed?

During the healing process a white diamond-shaped patch may form under the baby's tongue. This may be yellow if your baby is jaundiced. It gradually shrinks and will usually disappear one to two weeks after the procedure.

What should I do once I get home?

You should care for your baby as normal.

For the first 24 hours after the procedure, feed your baby at the first signs of them wanting a feed. If your baby is crying it is more likely that you may catch the wound area under the baby's tongue with the teat or your nipple which can make the wound start to ooze some blood.

What if there is bleeding from the wound?

If this happens:

- either apply continuous pressure with a clean cloth for five minutes and bleeding should stop
- or
- feed your baby as this helps to stop any oozing

If after five minutes of feeding or applying pressure the oozing has not stopped you must consult your GP or go to your local Accident and Emergency department.

What if my baby is unsettled?

Evidence suggests that babies do not feel much pain or soreness after the procedure. However if your baby does cry more than normal this usually settles within 24 hours. During this time it helps to continue to feed and cuddle your baby regularly. It is rare for a baby to require any pain relief but there are pain relief options available:

For babies under eight weeks of age

Paracetamol medicine is safe and can be prescribed by your GP.

For babies over eight weeks

Paracetamol (e.g. Calpol) can be given without a prescription as guided on the packaging.

What if my baby is reluctant to feed or there is a change in the way my baby feeds?

Some babies may feed differently after the procedure as the tongue is able to move more freely. If you are breast feeding your baby try giving some of your expressed breast milk from a plastic medicine spoon that has been sterilised to try and calm your baby and then try again to breastfeed your baby.

If you are using formula milk to feed your baby and they won't take the teat try giving some milk from a plastic medicine spoon that has been sterilised.

If your baby's feeding improves but then becomes a problem again please contact the Frenulotomy Service on the email address below:

tonguetie.assessment@nhs.net

Give them your baby's name, your contact number, the age of your baby and a brief description of the problem. You should receive an email response or telephone call within 14 days of your contact. The midwife who performed the frenulotomy will give you this information after the procedure. If you need more urgent help please contact your community midwife on the number listed at the back of this leaflet, health visitor, GP or your local hospital.

What follow up care will my baby receive?

A week after your baby's frenulotomy a midwife will ring you so please try to be available for this call on the phone number you have given us. The midwife will only make three attempts to contact with you. If you miss these calls and you would like to arrange another one please email tonguetie.assessment@nhs.net and you will receive an email response or telephone call within 14 days of your contact.

How can I help to prevent the tongue tie reforming?

It is rare for the tongue tie to reform (about four babies in every hundred). There is some evidence to suggest that encouraging your baby to poke their tongue out may help your baby's future tongue movement and reduce the risk of reformation. This will have been discussed with you at the clinic.

Can I find out more?

The following website links have more information about the frenulotomy procedure:

- NICE Guideline available at www.nice.org.uk/IPG149publicinfo
- Association of Tongue-tie Practitioners www.tongue-tie.org.uk
- UNICEF <http://www.unicef.org.uk/BabyFriendly/>
(search for tongue tie)
- Milk Matters <http://milkatters.org.uk/international-service-tongue-tie-talk/>
- La Leche League GB <http://www.laleche.org.uk/>
- Breastfeeding Network <http://www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/>
- Association of Breastfeeding Mothers
<http://abm.me.uk/frenulotomy-tongue-tie-release/>
- Journal article on 'Prevalence, diagnosis and treatment of ankyloglossia' available at
<http://www.cfp.ca/content/53/6/1027.full.pdf+html>
- Baby centre <http://www.babycentre.co.uk/a552046/tongue-tie>
- NHS Choices <http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/tongue-tie/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

National feeding help and support

Breastfeeding support contact numbers:

National Breastfeeding Helpline 0300 100 0212

La Leche League Breastfeeding Helpline 0845 120 2918

Association of Breastfeeding Mothers Counselling Helpline 0300 330 5453

If you need help with breastfeeding contact your local community midwife, breastfeeding buddy, support network or a breastfeeding helpline.

For non-urgent enquiries after the procedure please contact a frenulotomy practitioner on tonguetie.assessment@nhs.net. You will receive an email response or telephone call within 14 days of your contact.

If you require urgent support or advice following a frenulotomy procedure contact your local community midwife, health visitor, GP or your local hospital. The numbers for community midwives and for local support are on the following page.

Contact numbers for community midwives and local support:

Dudley	01384 244358 (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday) 01384 456111 ask for an on-call midwife (available 24 hours a day, seven days a week) Breastfeeding Buddy: 01384 366519 (9am to 4pm, Monday to Friday)
Sandwell	0121 507 3774 (8.15am to 4.45pm, Monday to Friday. Not available 1pm to 1.30pm) Sandwell breastfeeding helpline: 07505 775357 (9.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)
Walsall	01922 656248 (1pm to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday)
Stafford	01785 230059 (24 hours a day, seven days a week)
Bromsgrove	01527 488141 (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday) 01527 501 828 (24 hours a day, seven days a week)
Wolverhampton	01902 695140 (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday) 01902 307999 Ext 5035 or Ext 4035 (24 hours a day, seven days a week) Wolverhampton infant feeding team: 01902 307999 Ext 8389 (please note that this line is manned at different times each day)
Birmingham Women's Hospital	0121 472 1377 (24 hours a day, seven days a week)
Worcester	01905 760582 (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday) 01905 760570 (24 hours a day, seven days a week)

