

Massage+: Guide for Clinicians

1 – How to do H-HOPE: Massage+

2 – Massage+ empowers parents to engage with their infants and support their development

3 – This multi-sensory intervention, the ATVV which is now called Massage+, includes the behaviors that parents often use with their infants and involve auditory, tactile, visual and vestibular stimulation

4 – Parents are taught how to administer Massage+ by trained clinicians. Infants in the NICU receive Massage+ twice a day either from their parents or from clinicians when parents are not at the bedside.

5 – Steps of Massage+: 1) begin by talking to the infant for 30 seconds, 2) and then begin moderate touch stroking for 9.5 minutes, while continuing to talk with the infant, 3) engage in eye contact during the massage, and 4) lastly, swaddle the infant and rock for 5 minutes, while continuing to talk and look at the infant. Assess the infant's behavioral cues throughout and modify Massage+ in response to the infant's cues.

6 – Do not provide Massage+ if: 1) the infant has had an eye exam or stressful procedure, 2) if the infant is showing signs of sepsis or physiologic instability, 3) if the infant has a feeding intolerance, or 4) if the infant cannot be soothed, feed the infant first and then start Massage+ after the feeding

7 - To begin, the parent talks to the baby for 30 seconds using “motherease”, which includes talking softly, raising the pitch of the voice and then waiting for the baby to move in some way, in response to the parent's words or voice. Observe the mother's face in this picture and notice that she is a little apprehensive as she begins.

8– This picture depicts the infant raising her finger. This is a subtle behavioral cue in response to the mother's voice

9 - The massage begins with the baby's head. Gently stroke the baby's head six times from the forehead to the nape of the neck. Observe the change in the mother's facial expression.

10 - Then begin to stroke the baby's arms, legs, and all the way down the chest to the tummy. Here the mother chose not to stroke the infant's chest because of the placement of the central line. Stroke each arm and leg three times and then the chest. Then turn the baby over and stroke each side of the back 6 to 10 times. Next use a circular motion over the spine 6 to 10 times.

11 - In this picture, the baby yawns. So the parent removes her hands and pauses the massage to let the baby recover, and then continues. This is an example of a potent disengagement cue.

12– If there is time, return to massage the part of the body that the infant appeared to like the best. Note that this infant is in the quiet alert state and ready to interact. This is a potent engagement cue.

13 - To finish Massage+, swaddle the infant and rock side to side away from the body for 5 minutes. Continue talking to the infant while rocking. Here the mother appears happy and fulfilled.

14 – Here is a video demonstrating Massage+ on a 35 week post-menstrual age infant

15 – In summary, Massage+ is an activity that stimulates the infant's senses and is enjoyable for both the parent and infant. Massage+ helps infants become alert and ready to feed, so they eat, grow and sleep better. Here are some tips for teaching Massage+

- Parents can do massage on the infant while the clinician demonstrates each step simultaneously on a doll.
- It is important to give feedback to the parent about how the infant is responding to the massage. Ask the parent how they think the infant is responding. This helps them learn the behavioral cues.
- Remind parents that their infant may prefer some parts of Massage+ over others, and that the parent does not need to massage a body part if the infant does not appear to like it. If the infant's foot is sore from frequent needle sticks, do not massage the foot until healed.
- Review when to pause if the infant needs a break. If the infant is on a monitor, parents will want to listen for the alarm and ask the nurse if they should continue