

Caring for your baby after a tongue-tie division

Maternity Department Patient Information Leaflet



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Introduction

This leaflet gives advice on the care of your baby after a tongue-tie division (frenulotomy).

What happens after a tongue-tie division has been performed?

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

This picture shows normal wound healing after division:



What should I do once I get home?

You should care for and feed your baby as normal.

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?

Before you leave the clinic, the tongue-tie practitioner will ensure there is no bleeding from the wound. However, there is a possibility bleeding may start after you leave the clinic.

If this happens:

- Calm and feed your baby as this helps to stop any bleeding.

If your baby will not feed or bleeding continues after a feed:

- Apply continuous pressure for **five minutes** with a clean, dry cloth, such as a muslin cloth or gauze swab (**do not use cotton wool**) and the bleeding should stop.

If after five minutes the bleeding has not stopped, use a fresh, clean, dry cloth and apply continuous pressure to the wound again for another **five to 10 minutes**. Make sure you are applying pressure to the wound. Hold the cloth at all times, and **do not leave it in your baby's mouth**. Ensure that your baby's chin is not pressed down towards your baby's chest, so that your baby is able to breathe at all times. Try and keep your baby warm and calm.

- If after feeding or applying pressure the bleeding has not stopped, or if at any time you are concerned about your baby's wellbeing, we advise you to go to your local Emergency Department (ED). Keep continuous pressure under your baby's tongue using a clean cloth until the bleeding has stopped or until you have arrived in the ED.
- You may feel you need to call an ambulance.

When you arrive at the ED, give staff the letter you have been given by your tongue-tie practitioner. This letter may have been put in your Red Book.

What if my baby is unsettled?

Babies may feel some pain after the procedure, and if your baby does cry more than normal, this usually settles within 24 hours. Some babies may need pain relief:

For babies under eight weeks of age

Paracetamol medicine is safe if it is prescribed by your GP.

For babies over eight weeks

Paracetamol (eg Calpol) can be given without a prescription (always read the label; do not exceed the recommended dose).

Useful calming techniques

- Continue to feed your baby as much as he/she wants to.
- Skin to skin contact, keep your baby close.
- Baby massage.
- Put your baby in a sling – rocking / movement may help.
- Bathe with your baby.
- Consider dimming the lights and using soft music.

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 your baby is unable to latch on and breastfeed, try giving some of your expressed breast milk from a plastic medicine spoon that has been sterilised to calm them. Then try to breastfeed your baby again.

If you are using formula milk to feed your baby and they are reluctant to take the teat, try giving some formula milk from a plastic medicine spoon that has been sterilised.

We strongly recommend that you access some feeding support following the division of your baby's tongue-tie if you are having feeding difficulties. This may be from your community midwife, infant feeding specialist, health visitor, a local breastfeeding group or a breastfeeding helpline. This will help ensure that you and your baby are achieving a good latch following the division.

What follow up care will my baby receive?

A week after your baby's tongue-tie division, a member of the tongue-tie team will ring you. Please try to be available for this call on the phone number you have given us. If you miss the call and you have concerns you wish to discuss, please email:

dgft.tonguetie.assessment@nhs.net

Or call 01384 456111 ext. 3887 (Monday to Friday, 9am - 5pm)

How can I help to prevent the tongue-tie from reforming?

It is rare for the tongue-tie to reform. Regular breastfeeding may help your baby's future tongue movement and reduce the risk of reformation. This will have been discussed with you at the clinic.

If your baby's feeding improves but then becomes a problem again, please contact the tongue-tie clinic on the email address below:

dgft.tonguetie.assessment@nhs.net

Email your baby's name, your contact number, the age of your baby and a brief description of the problem.

You will receive an email response or telephone call within seven days of your email. If you need more urgent help, please contact your community midwife, health visitor, GP or your local hospital.

Can I find out more?

You can find out more from the following web links:

- Division of Ankyloglossia (Tongue-tie) for Breastfeeding 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)
- La Leche League GB: <http://www.laleche.org.uk/>
- Breastfeeding Network: <http://www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/>
- NHS Choices: <http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/tongue-tie/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

National feeding help and support

National breastfeeding support contact numbers are as follows:

- National Breastfeeding Helpline (9.30am - 9.30pm): 0300 100 0212
- La Leche League Breastfeeding Helpline (8am - 11pm): 0345 120 2918
- Association of Breastfeeding Mothers Helpline (9.30am - 10.30pm): 0300 330 5453
- National Childbirth Trust helpline 0300 330 0700

Local help and support

If you need help with breastfeeding, you can contact your local infant feeding team, community midwife, health visitor, support network or a breastfeeding helpline.

For non-urgent enquiries after the tongue-tie division procedure, please contact a tongue-tie practitioner on:

dgft.tonguetie.assessment@nhs.net

You will receive an email response or telephone call within seven days of your contact.

If you have any questions, or if there is anything you do not understand about this leaflet, please contact:

A tongue-tie practitioner at Russells Hall Hospital by calling 01384 456111 ext 3887 (Monday to Friday, 9am - 5pm).

For non-urgent queries you can email a tongue-tie practitioner at:

dgft.tonguetie.assessment@nhs.net

We aim to contact you within seven days.

This leaflet can be downloaded or printed from

<http://dgft.nhs.uk/services-and-wards/maternity/>

If you have any feedback on this patient leaflet, please email dgft.patient.information@nhs.net

This leaflet can be made available in large print, audio version and in other languages, please call 0800 073 0510.

للحصول على هذه النشرة بحجم أكبر، وعلى شكل إصدار صوتي و بلغات أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال بالرقم 08000730510.

此宣传单可提供大字版本、音频版本和其它语言版本，请拨打电话：0800 073 0510。

Ulotka dostępna jest również w dużym druku, wersji audio lub w innym języku. W tym celu zadzwoń pod numer 0800 073 0510.

ਇਹ ਪਰਚਾ ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ، ਬੋਲ ਕੇ ਰੀਕਾਰਡ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਅਤੇ ਦੂਸਰੀਆਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ, 0800 073 0510 ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ ਜੀ।

Aceasta broșura poate fi pusă la dispoziție tipărită cu caractere mari, versiune audio sau în alte limbi, pentru acest lucru vă rugăm sunați la 0800 073 0510.

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