

Foot Massage for Labor

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Preparation:

Position the foot so that it is supported for the woman's relaxation and for you to work comfortably with it. It is best done on bare feet, but may be done with socks on if preferred. If barefooted, you may choose to use an oil (vegetable oil is fine) or lotion. Pour the oil or lotion on your hands and rub them together to warm it before touching the foot.

1. Use firm strokes with the palms of both hands to massage the foot and calf up towards the heart, and lighter strokes to massage back down the calf.
2. Gently squeeze the entire foot with both hands
3. With your fingers on top of the foot, use your thumb to press in for about ten seconds, just under the ball of the foot.
4. Use your thumbs to make small circles on the bottom of the foot
5. Use your knuckles to massage the instep.
6. Use your fingertips to make small circles around the ankle bone* and top of the foot.
7. Use your fingertips or thumbs to stroke from the top of the ankle down between each toe.
8. Gently pull or wiggle each toe.
9. Squeeze the top of the foot with both hands three times.
10. Squeeze the bottom of the foot with both hands three times.
11. End with a "hand-foot sandwich": With your fingers pointing towards the ankle, use both hands to firmly 'sandwich' the foot. Hold firmly to a count of five, then lighten the pressure and pull hands away slowly. Repeat three times.

*There is an acupressure point between the inner ankle bone and Achilles tendon, which, when stimulated, may produce labor contractions. This point should not be stimulated on a pregnant woman unless she is in labor.