

Postnatal perineal scar tissue management

You can start scar tissue massage following your postnatal check, which is usually around six weeks after birth.

Massage is a gentle and effective way to soften and break down scar tissue. Although it might first feel uncomfortable it can help reduce pain and discomfort and gets easier with time.

Don't massage if you have an active infection. Look out for signs like excessive redness, bleeding, swelling, warmth, increased pain, or any discharge.

Start by taking a warm bath or shower to relax your muscles and increase blood flow to the area. Wash your hands with soap and water before you touch your scar as it is healing. You may also want to use a mirror to locate your perineal scar.

Find a comfortable position, either sitting or lying down with pillows for support, or standing with a foot on a chair, as you want to easily reach the scar.

To help your fingers glide smoothly you can apply either a small amount of oil, such as coconut, almond, or olive oil – as long as you're not allergic – or a small amount of hypoallergenic lubricant that is parabens and propylene-glycol free. You can buy this type of lubricant or get a prescription from your GP in the postnatal year.

Gently press your fingertips on the scar and move them in small circles along the scar. Start gently and aim for enough pressure to feel a comfortable stretch.

After a few circles, move your fingers gently up and down the scar.

At the sides, move your fingers from side to side and then across the scar.

For internal scars, insert your thumb about one inch into the vagina, with the pad of your thumb facing down towards the anus. Massage gently in a u shape from one side to the other.

We recommend massaging your scar at least four times a week for five to ten minutes per session. As discomfort lessens and scar mobility improves you can reduce the frequency. Regular massage is beneficial for scar tissue.

Gradually increase the pressure as you become more comfortable with the massage.

Perineal massage is a process that takes time so be patient. Remember to talk to a health professional for more advice.