

Frenotomy for Tongue Tie: The Unlikely Benefit of Massage

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Abstract : Introduction: Frenotomy for tongue tie is commonly performed in breastfed infants who experience difficulty in latching after failed conservative management for tongue tie. However, there is no consensus for the routine use of massage following frenotomy. Our aim was to assess the efficacy of massage in preventing recurrence following frenotomy. Methods: The tongue tie service in our tertiary referral hospital consists of 5 consultants and a breastfeeding (BF) midwife. 3 consultants routinely advice massage post procedure. Babies are assessed by the midwife after the procedure and a follow-up consultation after a week. After due ethical approval, data were collected by two staff members who were independent of TT service on a standardized questionnaire to avoid bias. Fischer exact test was employed ($p < 0.05$ considered significant). Results: Six hundred and thirty-two babies attended the clinic from January 2018 to December 2018. Thirty-three of these were excluded as the procedure was not needed. Parents were contacted at a median of six months post-procedure (range 2-10 months). 282/599 were advised massage. 92/282 could be contacted. 40/92 adhered to massage regimen. None of these had a recurrence. 52/92 (54%), although advised, did not perform massage. Reasons cited for lack of adherence to massage included difficulty in performing massaging and conflicting advice given by other health care professionals involved in patient care like paediatricians and group practice and lack of information on the internet). Overall, 4/599 (0.66%) had recurrences, and this difference was not statistically significant. Conclusion: In our experience, the rate of recurrence after frenotomy is low enough for us to conclude that there is no significant benefit of massage after frenotomy for tongue tie. We could also conclude that among parents who were advised massage more than half failed to adhere to the advice.

Keywords : tongue tie, frenotomy, massage, recurrence

Conference Title : ICMNCH 2019 : International Conference on Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health

Conference Location : Venice, Italy

Conference Dates : June 20-21, 2019