

FAQs for Parents



An older baby settles in happily for a massage in an infant massage class in the United States.

When is a good time to massage my baby?

We recommend that your baby be in the “quiet alert state” to massage him/her. Your baby will look calm, gaze at you, be happy to lay still, have open body posture, or reach out towards you. As you learn your baby’s cues you will know when it is the right time.

Why should I massage my baby?

There are many benefits for your baby and you. Please look at our [benefits page](#) to learn more.

What kind of oil should I use?

We recommend the use of a vegetable oil, which is preferably organic and cold pressed. See our page on [massage oils](#) for details.

Why should I ask my baby if he wants a massage before starting?

Babies understand much more than we realize. When babies are quiet and alert, we ask them if they would like a

massage. This helps them know that they can say yes or no to touch. We respect their body ownership and watch their cues to know if they want massage or not. More information in our [Oils & Permission](#) section.

Why should I attend an infant massage class?

While there are many books and videos available on Infant Massage, learning along with other parents from a Certified Infant Massage Instructor (CIMI or CEIM) is a more hands-on, interactive and personal experience. IAIM instructors teach each of the strokes one-by-one so you will feel comfortable and confident that you are doing them correctly. CIMIs also help you understand your baby's responses and can help answer any questions you may have about touch, bonding/attachment and other topics. During an Infant Massage class, you will also benefit from the interaction, knowledge and experience of other parents. Find a Certified IAIM instructor near you by [contacting your local chapter!](#)

Why does a class last 5-6 weeks?

We like to introduce babies to massage at their own pace. We watch their cues and introduce new strokes gradually, week-to-week. During our Infant Massage classes, you will be introduced to new information each week and build on previously taught techniques. Classes are designed to build relationships between parent and baby to instill trust and create positive associations. Long term training sessions also encourage engagement between parents fostering opportunities for ongoing support and friendships long after the classes are over.

Can both parents attend infant massage classes?

We encourage both parents to participate in Infant Massage classes. This gives your baby a chance to bond with each parent in his/her own way. Fathers and mothers often develop different styles and unique ways to interact with their babies, and these classes are a great opportunity for both parents to form a life-long bond with their child.



"Holding my baby helps me feel close to him," says a mother from Costa Rica.

How often can I massage my baby?

Follow your baby's cues.

It is wonderful to have massage be part of your daily family routine. Depending on your baby, she may be receptive in the morning, after a bath or before bedtime. Or he may be only open to accepting massage on his legs at one session, may like tummy massage during a diaper change, and like the whole body at bath time.

Many of the benefits are increased with regular daily massages. And some babies happily receive more than one massage a day.

When can I begin massaging my baby?

Introducing touch can be started soon after birth. Start with skin-to-skin care (such as Kangaroo Care). This involves placing your baby on your chest to facilitate close contact between you and your baby. (Dads love this!) You can gradually introduce back and leg strokes and then involve other parts of the baby's body. By following your baby's cues, looking for signs of being quiet and alert, you can begin massage during the first few weeks after birth and then gradually develop a nurturing routine that will last a lifetime. You will learn all this in your IAIM Infant Massage class.

What if my child has special needs?

Infant massage can be very helpful for babies who have experienced challenges in their lives. It is a wonderful way to strengthen the communication between parents and their children. Your IAIM Certified Infant Massage Instructor will be able to guide you as you massage your baby, or refer you to another instructor who has more knowledge and experience in this area. You and your baby are welcome in IAIM infant massage classes.

What should I consider when looking for an infant massage class near me?

First, make sure the educator is a CIMI or CEIM (as IAIM CIMIs are known in the US). This designation means that the instructor has attended a 4-day course, completed an exam as well as a practicum to gain the appropriate experience needed to teach parents. Also look for a course that is 4 to 6 weeks long. Infant Massage is best taught over several weeks so that new strokes and information are introduced gradually each week.

What should I bring to class?

Along with your normal diaper bag items, bring an extra receiving blanket and a pillow either for you to sit on or to prop up your baby.

Can I use an essential oil to massage my baby?

A baby's sense of smell is very strong. For that reason, we don't recommend using any fragrance near a young baby. You can use fragrances to entice your older child to receive a massage. [Learn more about the type of oils we recommend.](#)