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**Massages for everyone: the importance of infant massage**

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How precious is watching a mother interact and study her newborn baby for the first time? As midwives, we notice a mother’s loving touch, the soft murmurs, and the look of admiration at her baby. We also know how sacred this moment is and how important it is for the mother and baby’s bond and attachment in the future. My 15minute-presentation will explore how midwives can encourage this mother-infant bond in the postnatal period by implementing infant massage classes in the hospital setting.

Evidence shows that the use of touch during infant massage strengthens the mother-infant dyad. Benefits of performing this massage include an increase in mother-infant bonding time and in the mothers’ parenting confidence. This stems from the mother focusing on her baby during the massage and noticing the unique movements they make. Similar to a birthing class, this policy recommends a midwife run the postnatal infant massage class to reinforce the importance of noticing infant cues and encouraging the mother to respond accordingly, while also supporting an opportunity for a mother to bond with her baby.

The aim of this policy is to support a mother to identify her baby’s cues and movements and respond accordingly. By picking up on these cues, the mother will feel more confident in her parenting and ability to bond with her baby. It is expected that by implementing this postnatal class mothers will feel prepared emotionally to satisfy the needs of their baby and satisfied in their own mothering ability.

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