

Postnatal Perineal Scar Tissue Management

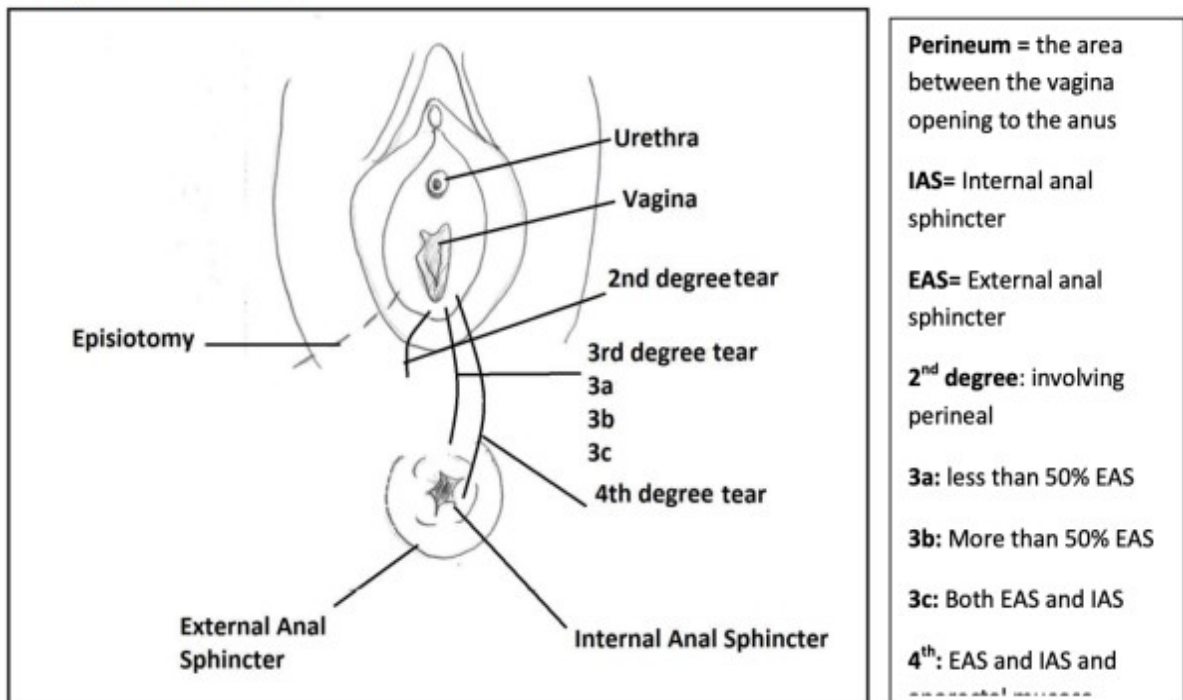
Postnatal perineal scar massage

If you have had an episiotomy or a perineal tear at birth, then the scar tissue around the area can become tight and may become attached to the layers below. This may cause discomfort during intercourse or every day activities. By massaging the perineal area, you can reduce your scar tissue and make it softer.

When should I start massaging?

Wait until you have had your postnatal check which is usually at 6 weeks. Ensure your stitches are fully healed before beginning. You should not start massage if you have any vaginal infection as this could make it worse.

The perineal area



How to do the perineal massage

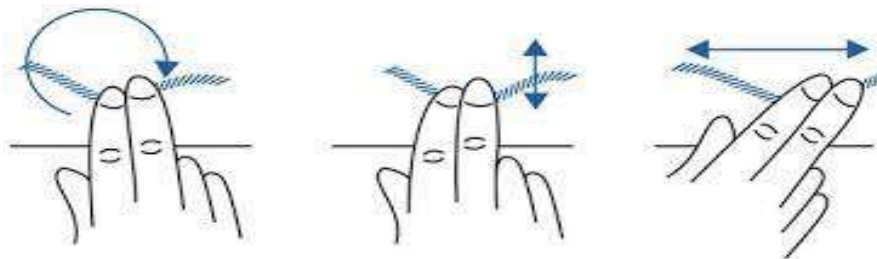
1. It helps to have had a warm bath or use a warm compress before starting in order to help to relax the muscles and increase the blood flow to the area.
2. Make yourself comfortable: lying or semi sitting, use pillows.
3. Use oil or lubrication for comfort – e.g. organic almond, coconut or olive oil (as long as you are not allergic to it) or a perineal massage oil.
4. You should massage the scar tissue in three directions for 5-10 minutes a day.

Technique – Perineal massage

Get into a comfortable position lying on the bed with your head raised with your legs gently opened and supported with pillows if required, alternatively you can do this with one leg up on the side of the bath.

External scar

- Start externally. With your thumb or fingers as in the diagram below apply some gentle pressure to the scar and massage along the line of the scar, across the scar and then in circles over the scar.
- Work along the length of the scar from your vagina towards the anus.
- Start gently and as the tissues relax apply a little more pressure.



Internal scar

- Insert your finger into the entrance of your vagina so the pad of your thumb is facing down towards your anus.
- Place your index finger over your perineum so that you lightly pinch the inside and outside of the perineum with your thumb and index finger (you should be able to feel the scar beneath).
- Start with gentle circular movements along the scar and then along the scar and across it. As it becomes easier and you become more relaxed increase the pressure.
- Next, apply a firm pressure on the back of the vaginal opening with your thumb and make firm “U” shapes (going from 4 to 8 as if imagining a clock) over the scar area. This might feel a little bit tender to start with but gently ease into it.

