

## **Self Perineal and Labia Massage**

**Needed items:** quiet space, hand mirror, some kind of non-chemical and non-harsh oil or massage cream (try to find one with all natural ingredients, or use a light olive oil or vitamin E oil, heating pad if you want.

### **Rules:**

1. If you have too much pain while doing this, and you tried massaging lighter and it still hurts, stop. Try again another time.
2. If you have strange odor or discharge, contact your doctor or nurse.
3. If you feel tingling or numbness, move position, you might be on a nerve or blood vessel.
4. If you've just had a baby, wait 6 weeks at least prior to doing any massage and get your doctor's OK before working on an episiotomy scar.
5. Never do this on an open wound (like a scar that hasn't healed.)

**Suggestion:** It might be helpful to have stretched your legs and pelvic floor muscles first (see separate handouts) or to have taken a hot bath or done your belly breathing (separate handout.)

-Wash your hands. Lie down on your back in a safe and quiet place. Your knees will be bent so your feet are flat on the bed. Place a heating pad over your lower abdomen if you like. You might want to put a pillow under each knee to relax. You will have the best results if you work directly on your skin, but if you feel funny about touching your vagina and labia, then you can try to do this thru your underwear until you feel comfortable to touch yourself.

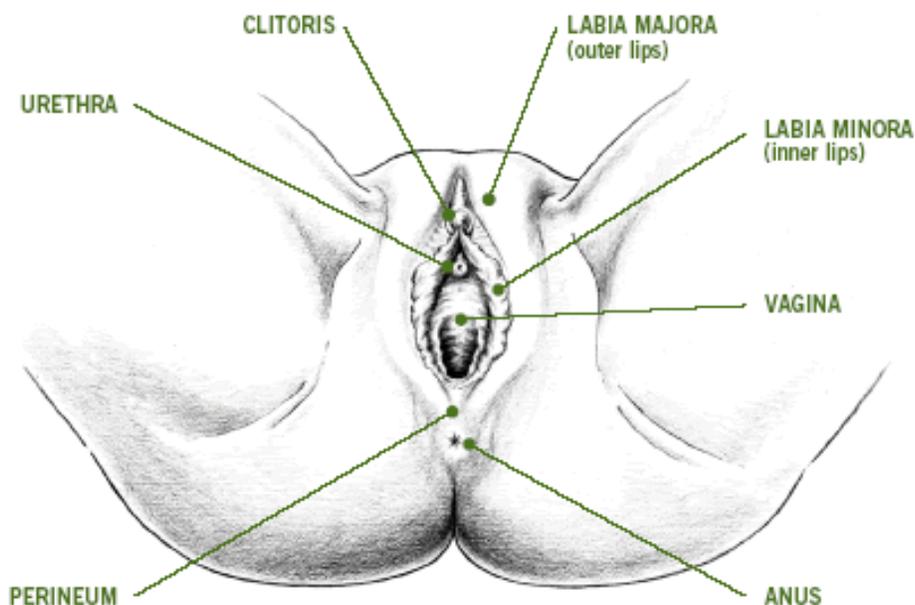
-Bring out the hand mirror and place it so you can see yourself.

-Imagine a clock, and place those numbers around your perineum so that 12:00 is at the pubic bone on top, 6:00 is at your coccyx at the bottom, 3:00 is on your left hip and 9:00 is the right hip.

-The very center of the clock is the area of skin between the vagina and anus. It is called the perineal body or "central tendon." Many muscles connect there. When pressed, it shouldn't hurt, and the tissue should have some "give" to it.

## THE VULVA

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[The Vulva. Chart. Victoria: The Cancer Council, 2007.]

- To start, use the pads of your fingertips to gently massage in little circles around each imaginary number of the “clock.” You’ll massage through the hair along the labia majoras on each side and even on the mons of the pubis. **KEEP BELLY BREATHING AND RELAXING YOUR PELVIC FLOOR MUSCLES AS YOU DO THIS!**
- Do 5 to 15 seconds at each spot, but if it feels helpful or especially good in a particular spot, you can stay a little longer.
- Only massage to a depth that feels comfortable. If you are in pain, you may only do very light massage, even this should help.
- Finish up by trying to circle right over the Perineal Body, the area right in the middle of your perineum, between the vagina and anus. Be gentle as you go. Monitor how easily the tissue moves. If it is very tight, try moving or stretching the tissue in different directions and holding it for a few seconds.