

Tethered Oral Tissues (TOTs)

Information for families

Definitions:

Frenulum- a small fold or ridge of tissue that supports the part to which it is attached, in particular a fold of skin beneath the tongue, or between the lip and the gum. The plural form of frenulum is “frena.”

Tongue-tie- A tongue or “lingual” frenulum that is restricted and inhibits normal movement. Can be described as anterior or posterior, meaning the location of the attachment to the underside of the tongue.

Lip-tie- A lip or “labial” frenulum that is restricted and inhibits normal movement

Cheek-tie- A cheek or “buccal” frenulum that is restricted and inhibits normal movement

Tethered oral tissues (TOTs)- a term used to describe all restricted frena (tongue-tie, lip-tie, and cheek-tie)

Release- A treatment procedure of cutting the frenulum to “release” the restriction. Can be done with scissors, laser or scalpel.

Bodywork- Therapy which involves manipulating the body such as craniosacral therapy, massage, and myofascial release

Speech-Language Pathologist- A health professional who works with the baby/child on oral movement, feeding and speech skills and development

Manual Therapist- A physical therapist or occupational therapist who works with the baby/child on body movement skills and development

Bodyworker- A massage therapist or chiropractor who works with the baby/child on body tension, restrictions and movement

Lactation Counselor- A health professional who works with the mother and infant on breastfeeding latch, suck, positioning and milk management

Pediatric Dentist- A doctor who can diagnose and perform a releases of tethered oral tissues (often with a laser)

ENT (Ear, Nose and Throat) Doctor- A doctor who can diagnose and perform a release of tethered oral tissues (often with scissors)

It is imperative that your baby/child work with a team of professionals in order to optimize the timing of tongue, lip or cheek ties release.



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Recipe for Success

Pre-Release of TOTs:

1. Comprehensive evaluation of TOTs and oral motor functions by an SLP/OT (trained in oral motor and/or TOTs)
2. At least 3 weeks of speech/feeding therapy (depending on severity)
3. Contact dentist/doctor for consultation and set up appointment for release of TOTs
4. Set up manual therapy and/or bodywork- At least 3 sessions:
 - Session 1: within a 2 weeks prior to the release
 - Session 2: within a week prior to the release
 - Session 3: within a week after the release
 - Session 4: a week after the release**OR** the number of treatment sessions therapist recommends
5. Complete stretches/oral motor protocols at home 1-3x daily prior to release

Release of TOTs:

6. Go to dentist/doctor for release
7. Complete stretches/oral motor protocols within first 24 hours after release

Post-Release of TOTs:

9. Continue speech/feeding therapy sessions for recommended frequency and intensity
10. See manual therapist/bodyworker for at least 2 sessions after or recommended frequency and intensity
11. Continue stretches/oral motor protocols at home 3x daily or as recommended per release provider

Parent Checklist

<input type="checkbox"/>	Set up weekly speech/feeding therapy sessions
<input type="checkbox"/>	Contact manual therapist and/or bodyworker to set up sessions
<input type="checkbox"/>	Contact dentist/ENT to set up consultation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Set up date of release (dentist/ENT)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bring child to manual therapy/bodywork sessions
<input type="checkbox"/>	Practice oral motor exercises, techniques, positioning, and other homework given by therapists
<input type="checkbox"/>	After release: Complete stretches/exercises daily

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Recommended TOTs Professionals

Type	Name	Contact
Speech Therapist	Annika Suarez, MS, CCC-SLP, CLC (Tallahassee)	(850) 909-5521 (option 2) annika@sunnyspeech.com www.sunnyspeech.com
	----- Kelli Bell, MS, CCC-SLP (Crawfordville)	----- (850) 673-9214 kbellspl@gmail.com
	----- Valerie Mason, MS, CCC-SLP (Crawfordville)	----- (352) 538-6177
Dentist	Dr. Shawn Hanway, DDS (Tallahassee)	(850) 666-5365 www.tallahassee pediatric dentistry.com
	----- Dr. Gary Myers, DDS (Middleburg & Jacksonville)	----- (904) 505-2010 www.tooth2tooth.com
Massage Therapist (bodyworker)	Jodi Lawson, LMT (Havana & Tallahassee)	(850) 559-0080
	----- McKale Fleming, LMT, IBCLC	----- (229) 360-6676 McKalefleming.com
Chiropractor (bodyworker)	Dr. Rob Callahan (Tallahassee)	(850) 877-8980 www.healthsourcechiro.com
	----- Dr. Matthew Zaideman (Tallahassee)	----- (850) 877-6790 https://www.healthytallahassee.com/new-patients
Manual Therapist (Physical Therapist)	Dr. Michelle Weeks (Tallahassee & Panama City)	(850) 270-7506 https://www.weekswellness.com
Lactation Consultant	Sarah Ward, IBCLC (Tallahassee)	(850) 764-5517 sarah@tallylactation.com www.tallylactation.com
	----- Carolyn Reierstad, IBCLC (Tallahassee)	----- (850) 559-2663 carolyn@lifewithbabytallahassee.com
Pediatrician (release via scissors *infants)	Dr. Russell Homan Canopy Pediatrics (Tallahassee)	(850) 701-9652
Ear, Nose and Throat Doctor (ENT)	Tallahassee Ear, Nose and Throat (Tallahassee)	(850) 877-0101

