

SPECIAL HEALTHCARE BENEFITS

NICU | PREMATURITY | FASD | NAS Benefits of Massage:

- provides opportunity for relaxation and bonding with caregiver
- introduces positive, nurturing touch and provides appropriate stimulation
- reduces cortisol and norepinephrine levels (stress hormones)
- may increase lung capacity
- may improve sleep
- may increase weight gain
- may improve brain and neurological development
- may help state organization

DOWN SYNDROME | Benefits of Massage:

- may improve muscle tone
- may increase performance on motor tasks
- may increase motility and provide relief from constipation
- may improve body awareness and spatial awareness

CEREBRAL PALSY | Benefits of Massage:

- may reduce spasticity
- may encourage muscle flexibility
- may increase or reduce muscle tone
- may encourage motor function
- may encourage more positive social interaction

CONTRACTURES | Benefits of Massage:

- may help to soften tight soft tissues which restrict particular position/movement
- range of motion may be increased following massage therapy

MUSCLE TONE | Benefits of Massage:

- **HYPERTONICITY** - may decrease tone
- **HYPOTONICITY** - may increase tone

SENSORY CONCERNS | Benefits of Massage:

- may provide relaxation and decrease sleeping issues
- may help child to adapt to become more accustomed to tactile stimulation
- may help nervous system to process various stimuli
- may help with body awareness
- introduces positive, nurturing touch and provides appropriate stimulation
- may improve brain and nervous development
- may provide relaxation and decrease anxiety
- may help child to adapt to become more accustomed to tactile stimulation

FEEDING CONCERNS | Benefits of Massage:

- may clear sinuses prior to oral feed to help with neurological coordination
- may stimulate nervous system to increase production of food absorption hormones
- may aid in relaxation (rest and digest)

RESPIRATORY CONCERNS | Benefits of Massage:

- may reduce hospitalizations
- may decrease anxiety and stress hormones
- may improve peak air flow and pulmonary functions
- may provide increase in movement in the rib cage and diaphragm to allow for deeper breathing