



# CO<sub>2</sub> COLLABORATIVE

## CARE + RESEARCH

### **Putting the FUN in FUNction: The R&B's**

#### **Step 1: RELAX Lips**

The lip swirl relaxes and allows for a manual stretch of the muscles of the lips while stimulating the sensation of “kissing”. If done gently with playful and comforting support, the brain realizes the benefit of relaxation of the muscles of emotion and activates the sphincters (from the lips to the hips) in a coordinated effort for whole body integration.

Instructions: Place your finger inside the upper and lower lips and gently circle and stretch the muscles while stimulating the nerves of the lips.

#### **Step 2: RELEASE Cheeks**

The cheek stretch releases the muscles of the buccinator muscle and fascia. When you are stretching this area, you are releasing the tension on the only group of tissues that pull the lower jaw toward the back of the head. It also relaxes the muscles of the airway and stress response.

Instructions: Place your pointer finger and thumb in the inside and outside of the cheek in a pincer grip and place pressure to stretch the cheek tissue forward and away from the back of the head. Repeat on both sides until you can sense that the muscles are comfortable and relaxed.

With the same hand position, locate and massage any tight or sore areas of the masseter (clenching) muscles until the muscle fibers soften.

Place a finger inside of the mouth between the jaw joint and the skull to locate any sore areas of muscle tightness. Massage until the lateral pterygoid muscle softens.

#### **Step 3: RELIEVE Under the Tongue**

By relieving the tension of the muscles of the floor of the mouth through gentle massage, tongue movements can be more comfortable. The goal is to promote tissue mobility and increased blood flow to the muscles of the instead of the floor of the mouth so that the brain can learn a more efficient and comfortable way to swallow.

Instructions: With gentle pressure, place your finger under the tongue (one side at a time) between the side of the tongue and the inside of the lower jaw. Massage this area to gently stretch the muscles that are critical in achieving an efficient swallow. Be aware of the differences in how the muscles respond to reports of tenderness to touch between right and left and share these observations with your provider team.

#### **Step 4: BALANCE the maxilla**



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Bilaterally release maxillae and (indirectly) palatines by gently providing support to the

1. Premaxilla with a gentle motion behind where the upper front teeth are (or will be)
2. The highest place on the roof of the mouth while also providing gentle pressure with one finger to the top of the head (vomer release)
3. The right and left roof of mouth by placing fingers or thumbs on the slope of the two bones that create the palate and placing force away from the midline in a slight upwards direction

Step 5: BeHOLD the ears

1. Gently hold the ears between your fingers and thumbs
2. Create motion in the fascia near the temporal bone by utilizing the ears as little handles by gently pulling outward

Step 6: Be GENTLE as you massage the tight muscles at the junction between the head and neck at the base of the skull

1. Use your fingertips to feel for areas of tightness
2. Observe the muscles for signs of distress or discomfort and report them to your provider team