

## The Procedure for treating a Tongue-Tie

If your health professional suspects that a tongue restriction may be causing a breastfeeding or bottle feeding related issue, a referral will be sent. You will be contacted to attend the midwife-led tongue-tie clinic for an assessment by a qualified tongue-tie practitioner. A simple surgical technique is used to treat the tongue-tie on an outpatient basis.

At this time you may be told that there is not a tongue-tie or that the release is not necessary or helpful for your particular feeding issue. You will then be referred back to your health care professional for further support.

The procedure involves the division of your baby's frenulum (tongue-tie), using round, blunt ended scissors to free the tongue.

No anaesthetic is needed and there is little or no pain or bleeding.

## After the Procedure

Immediately following the procedure you will be encouraged to breastfeed or bottle feed your baby. Continuing to breastfeed will help to facilitate the healing process.

It may take a while for your baby to get used to its newly released tongue. You may or may not feel an immediate difference in your baby's feeding.

During the healing process a small white patch may be seen under the tongue of your baby. This is normal and should resolve within two weeks of division.

If you think your baby may have a tongue-tie that is causing you a feeding concern, first contact your midwife or health visitor who will complete a feeding assessment and if necessary refer for further assessment and diagnosis.

You may require some continued support with breastfeeding until your baby gets used to this new action, therefore please inform your midwife or health visitor that the procedure has been performed.

## Useful contact Details

If you are concerned about your baby at any time, please contact your:

- GP
- Infant Feed Lead  
South Eastern HSC Trust  
**Tel: (028) 9056 1339**
- Community Midwife
- Health Visitor.

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# Suspected Tongue-Tie Assessment and Referral



Family information leaflet

Tongue-tie is a tight piece of skin between the underside of the tongue and the floor of the mouth.

## Tongue-Tie

Full tongue movement helps your baby to feed much more effectively from your breast or bottle.

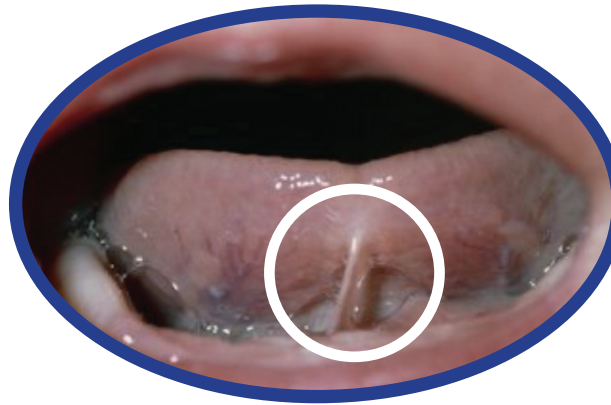
It is very important that a midwife, health visitor or other health professional sees you feeding your baby in order to complete a full breastfeeding assessment.

The South Eastern HSC Trust uses the Baby Friendly Initiative '**Breastfeeding assessment**' form so they can identify any problems or issues and help you overcome them.



## What is a Tongue-Tie?

A baby is described as having tongue-tie when the small piece of a membrane or frenulum, joining the underside of the tongue to the floor of their mouth has formed in such a way, which makes full tongue movements difficult.



Release of a tongue-tie may help your baby to feed more effectively by improving the range of tongue movement necessary to breast feed.

## Problems

Babies may present with a range of problems relating to breastfeeding including:

- Difficulty or inability to latch on to the breast
- Constantly slipping off the breast
- Excessive weight loss
- Constant or very frequent feeding
- Unsettled baby
- May make a clicking noise while feeding.

## Mothers often complain of:

- Sore nipples similar to a 'grating' sensation
- Misshapen nipples after a feed
- Pain during feeds
- Engorgement or mastitis
- Ineffective removal of milk
- Poor milk supply
- Distress due to difficulty in establishing breastfeeding.