

## What do you mean ask my baby if it's a good time for a massage?

"Is this a good time for a massage?" Actually ask your baby - either in a quiet whisper or straight out just like talking to any other person you like. Smile, use a sing-songy voice and talk as if your baby can understand you, because she does understand you. It's less about the words and far more about the intention behind the words. The vast majority of communication between people is non-verbal. We so depend on non-verbal signals to help us decipher what is actually being said. Besides, whenever we ask our baby this question, we are setting up a pattern for them to understand that they have a choice in the matter, that we are attempting to understand what they want, what they need and that they do own their body and have a right to say "yes" or "no" in whatever way they can best communicate in that moment. You know your baby best. What is she saying? Look at her eyes, her body language, the sounds she is making - look for a variety of cues. It is the whole set of signals all together that, in most cases, will indicate that it is, indeed, a good time...or not, and if it's not, that's okay.

Many parents and families will become discouraged - saying "oh, he just doesn't like being massaged". When I ask if the baby was asked "Is this a good time for a massage?" it is then that most parents realize there was a missing component in the approach. Some parents really need to experience what we're talking about - and then they have this "ah-ha" moment. Either way, the ah-ha moment is the moment of realization that babies are not all that different from us - they have needs and wants, likes and dislikes. When parents and families realize they were attempting to massage their baby at a time that was not good for the baby, it is then they begin to further understand their baby's cues and signals - for some, this takes practice. Trust yourself. You know your baby, and your baby knows you. Be patient, your baby needs time to respond - do you know that, on average, it takes infants six times longer than adults to process information? Infant massage will help you to continuing learning more about eachother everytime you share this very special time - and it's brain building too!