FOR REFERRING PROVIDERS

Tongue & Lip Ties in Infant Feeding

A clinical reference for IBCLCs, speech-language pathologists, feeding therapists, pediatricians, and bodyworkers.

WHAT ARE TETHERED ORAL TISSUES?

Tethered oral tissues (TOTs), including tongue, lip, and buccal ties, are frenula restrictive enough to limit how freely the tongue, lips, or cheeks can move. Plenty of babies have a visible frenulum that causes no trouble at all. What matters is **function**: when restriction keeps a baby from latching, sealing, and moving milk efficiently, a release can be one part of the solution.

Tongue
Lifts, extends, and cups around the nipple to seal and draw milk out in a wave-like rhythm.

Lips
Flange outward to hold the seal and keep negative pressure steady through the feed.

Cheeks
Stabilize the mouth so the suck-swallow-breathe cycle can stay coordinated.

SIGNS WORTH A CLOSER LOOK

In baby

- Shallow latch, slipping off, or frequent re-latching
- Clicking or smacking sounds while feeding
- Milk leaking from the corners of the mouth
- Long or very frequent feeds; tiring before full
- Slow weight gain
- Gassiness, hiccups, or reflux-like signs from swallowed air
- Lip blisters, or a tongue that can't reach past the gums

In the feeding parent

- Nipple pain that lasts beyond the first week or two
- Creased, flattened, or lipstick-shaped nipples after feeds
- Nipple damage, blanching, or vasospasm
- Recurrent plugged ducts or mastitis
- Low or dropping milk supply
- Feeds that never seem to end

No single sign means a tie. Alongside your assessment, they help us decide together whether an evaluation makes sense.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU REFER

1

Functional evaluation

Dr. Naomi looks at how the tongue, lips, and cheeks move, not just how they look, and reviews the feeding history and your findings. If a release isn't indicated, we'll say so.

2

Gentle laser release

When arelease is appropriate, Dr. Naomi performs it herself with a CO_2 laser, which allows a precise release, typically with minimal bleeding.

3

Aftercare & follow-up

Families gohome with clear aftercare guidance and return for follow-up visits so we can check healing and function together.

A TEAM APPROACH

A release improves range of motion, but it doesn't teach a baby how to use it. That's why outcomes are best when the procedure is paired with the feeding support, oral motor therapy, and bodywork you already provide. If we feel a baby needs more preparation before a release, we'll work with you on that first. Afterward, we send families back to you with a visit summary and coordinate on timing, because when the whole team works together, the whole family does better.

MEET DR. NAOMI



Dr. Naomi Sedani, DMD

A pediatric dentist with multiple certifications in tethered oral tissues, Dr. Naomi founded Lil' Dente Pediatric Dentistry in Darien. She created Lil' Ties and Smiles to give families a calm, dedicated home for tongue and lip tie care.

GOOD TO KNOW

- ✓ We primarily see infants; children over 2 are evaluated case by case.
- ✓ Self-pay practice with flat, upfront fees.
- ✓ Superbills provided; HSA and FSA eligible.
- ✓ Every laser procedure is performed by Dr. Naomi.

Refer a family

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Or send families in with a slip from our referral pad. We'll take it from there.