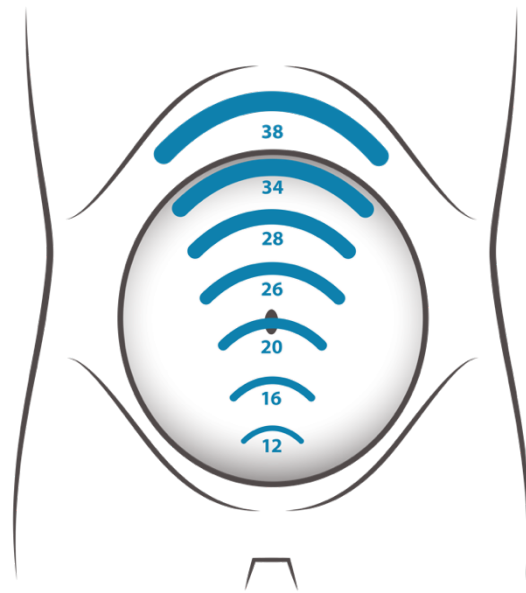

Your Abdominal Massage In Pregnancy

A simple home care guide

This is a beautiful way for you to connect with your belly and your baby/ies. We encourage you to do Your Abdominal Massage (YAM) daily as part of a nurturing routine to keep your growing uterus well supported, buoyant, and balanced in your body. YAM aims to support your comfort and your baby's optimum birthing position.

It's good to know where the top of your uterus is, also known as fundal height. As your baby/ies grow, your uterus height will increase. Here's a rough guide, individual variations are expected, especially for pregnancies with multiples.

Your practitioner will help you locate the top of your uterus.



Are you ready to YAM?

- ⦿ Empty your bladder and find a quiet moment in a comfortable setting.
- ⦿ Gather plenty of pillows to support yourself and get into semi-reclining position with a pillow under your knees.
- ⦿ Roll on to your left side if you feel dizzy and take long, slow, deep breaths.
- ⦿ Take this time to connect with your womb and your baby/ies by placing your hands gently over your abdomen.
- ⦿ Breathe gently and focus on each slow out breath.
- ⦿ Ask yourself to relax your jaw, your shoulders and wherever else you feel tension.
- ⦿ You may find it helpful initially, to have these instructions read out a loud while you do YAM.

Let's start with your upper abdomen

Referring to the diagram of uterus height on the previous page, since you are to stop your downward stroke when you reach the top of your uterus, you should expect these strokes to get shorter with time as your uterus height increases with pregnancy.

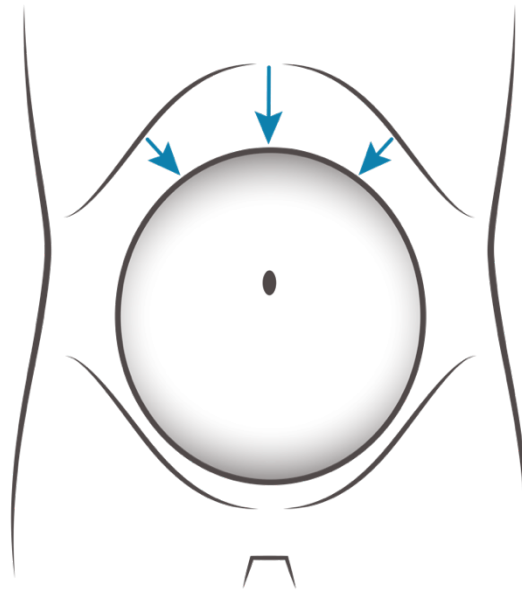
You can do YAM throughout your pregnancy. If diastasis recti is suspected, do not perform the central strokes. Keep your breathing relaxed and regular throughout.

- ⦿ You can choose how to perform YAM:
 - ⦿ Through loose clothing.
 - ⦿ Over a sheet.
 - ⦿ Directly on your skin, with or without oil/lotion.
- ⦿ Place your hands flat on your body, fingertips touching, just below your sternum in whatever space is available.
- ⦿ Inhale.

Central stroke

As you exhale, apply some gentle pressure and slowly move your hands down towards your navel. Stop when you reach the top of your uterus.

- ⦿ Repeat three times.



Side stroke

On one side of your abdomen, starting with your fingertips resting on the edge of your ribcage, using the same gentle pressure and breathing pattern, move your fingers diagonally towards your navel, stopping as you reach the uterus.

- ⦿ Repeat three times on each side.

This entire sequence 3 central/3 side/3 side (which is 9) gets repeated 3 times, finishing with 3 final central strokes. This makes 30 strokes total. Or perhaps it feels right to do more or less? Trust the intuitive wisdom of your body and baby(ies).

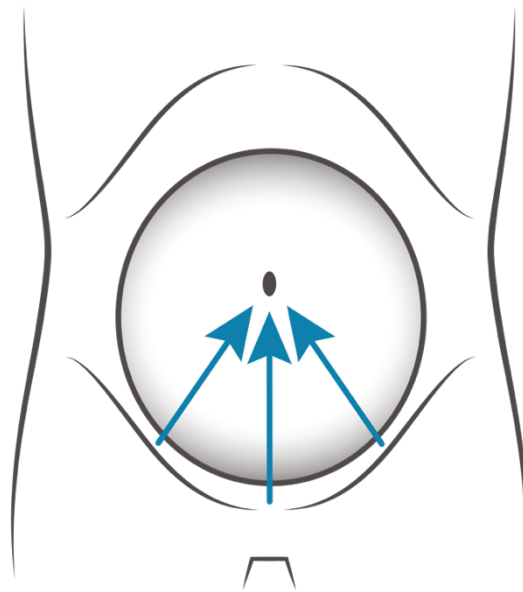
Now let's move to your lower abdomen

It is suggested you start the lower massage after 20 weeks.

Bring the sides of your index fingers together and cross your thumbs behind them, allow your fingers to curl gently.

Starting position

Place your fingers on your pubic bone and allow them to gently rest into the space just above.



Central stroke

With relaxed hands that are in full contact with your lower belly, slowly draw your hands towards your navel with a gentle pressure.

- ⦿ Repeat three times.

Side stroke

Position your hand with the pinky finger, along the inside edge of your pelvic bone, fingers pointing towards your pubic bone. Then with the whole palm of your hand flat on your belly stroke diagonally from one hip up towards the center of your belly.

- ⦿ Repeat three times.
- ⦿ Repeat on the other side.

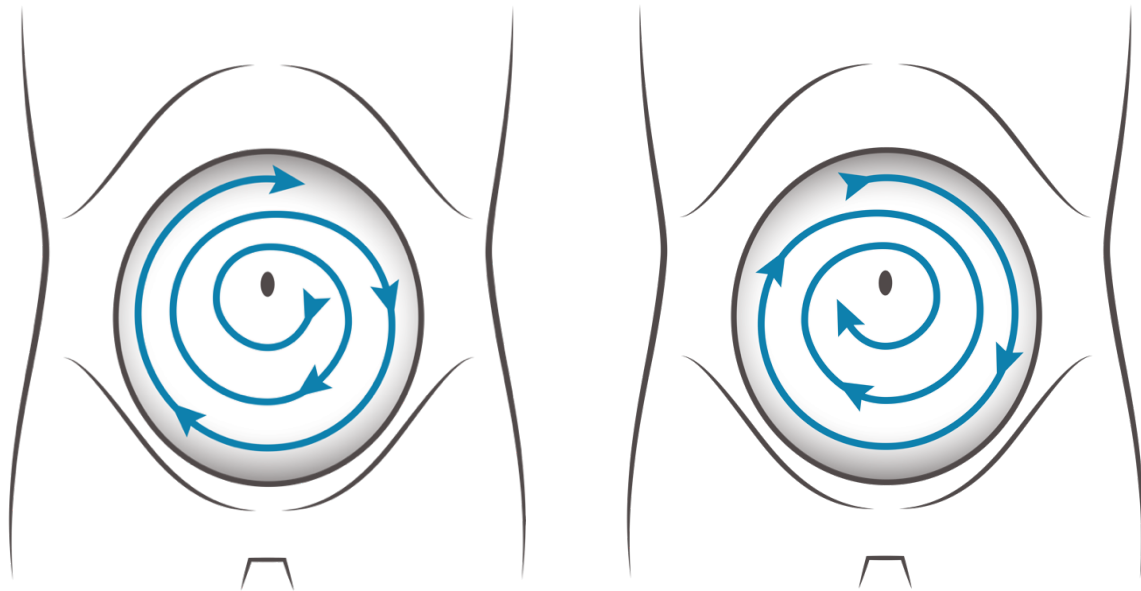
This entire sequence 3 central/3 side/3 side (which is 9) gets repeated 3 times, finishing with 3 final central strokes. This makes 30 strokes total. Or perhaps it feels right to do more or less? Trust the intuitive wisdom of your body and baby(ies).

Bringing it all together

Final spiral

Relax both hands, flat on your belly.

- ⦿ Slowly spiral lightly around your navel clockwise. Gradually make your spiral bigger until you are including your whole belly.



- ⦿ Maintaining your clockwise movement, gradually close your spiral, making your circles progressively smaller until your hands are resting on your navel.
- ⦿ Repeat 3 times.
- ⦿ Take a few moments to connect deeply with your baby/ies. Simply focus on having welcoming, loving thoughts and imagine your womb infused with rich nutrients.

If you have any concerns get in contact with your practitioner.

If you're bleeding, cramping, or your waters break, do **NOT** continue your massage and call your Midwife or Doctor.