

## Reflexology helped a baby on a long haul flight



**By Lynne Booth**

Many years ago I was on a long haul flight for a teaching tour of Australia and the sleeping passengers were awoken to the lights coming on and a baby screaming. Reflexologists have wonderful transportable, readily available skills to offer with no equipment necessary and I have always felt that in emergency situations we should offer them, but with discernment. The usual request went out for a doctor or medic to make themselves known and 3 passengers went up but the screams continued unabated and I wished I could help.



My husband suggested to me that I offer my skills as I teach reflexology for babies but I knew that at least 2 doctors were with the tiny child. However, his next words taught me a lesson that I have never forgotten. He said, "G.P's sometimes send parents and babies to you and yet you hesitate to intrude? The worst that can happen to you is that you will be rejected. Surely you are strong enough to take that?" I instantly pressed my call button and spoke to an air steward. By then any extra help was warmly welcomed! The 6 month old child was hot, rigid and wailing.



I took her tiny feet, avoiding the toes, slipped my fingers either side of the diaphragm and, with a scissor-like movement, gently rocked each foot. I worked the plantar in a soft rotational brush with my thumb. I then began to work the spinal reflexes and the babe immediately relaxed and gave a last piercing scream. For a worrying second her face went grey, then red then a normal flesh colour and she stopped crying completely. I was asked what I had done.

I replied that I guessed the top of her spine/neck was compressed or in spasm possibly causing a violent headache and that maybe reflexology had helped to release the contraction.

The young mother sheepishly replied that I could be right as her two year old had hit the baby on the head with a picture frame before they left for the airport "but she then seemed to be OK". I can only assume that the pressure had built up in the baby's neck to an intolerable level.

We all advised the mother to take the baby to an airport doctor on arrival. The infant then had a feed and a relaxed sleep and the following 4 hours of the flight were calm and uneventful. Here is link to a little video where I demonstrate the scissor action of Diaphragm Rocking to help calm a baby. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lcw4mgwTTy8>

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