

# RIDE THE BULL: HOW TO HELP HEALING AFTER FRENECTOMY

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## Did you know that full healing of a frenectomy site can take up to six months?

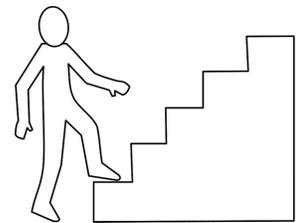
It has been my observation that there are significant changes occurring long after the surface layer has healed! The connective tissue in the floor of the mouth goes through an amazing process over the months following a release. When you consider the profound impact these tiny pieces of tight tissue have on (at times) the entire body, the unfolding of function that follows such a release is quite remarkable!

For many moms who find themselves in the midst of a "Tether-berg" situation, I tell them, for the sake of their baby or child, to "Ride the Bull." As many moms have experienced, the weeks and even months after oral tissue release can literally be a wild ride, filled with many ups and downs. From what I understand about bull riding, the goal is to hang on for a certain amount of time and try not to get thrown to the ground; recovering and attaining new oral function can be no different than trying to win a rodeo.

Muscle movement from the tongue helps recover the nervous system (not just of the tongue, but the whole body). Input from the nervous system helps heal the tissue. Freed tissue helps drive muscle movement and synergistic feedback continues to drive this changing, dynamic system. There are many ways in which positive impact can be made: touch and pressure (exercises and massage), movement (breastfeeding and muscle work), vibration and stimulation (sensory work and chiropractic care, tummy time and yoga), and most importantly, establishing proper nasal breathing and solid quality nutrition.

All of these methods open up the oral system, help break up old patterns, and encourage new movement. The goal of frenectomy and oral rehabilitation is optimal oral function. Optimal nasal breathing and oral function helps drive proper facial growth and development. Adequate airway formation and facial growth, along with a stable nervous system, are part of the foundation of a healthy life.

If you feel that you are not getting perfect or ideal results and feel that function is not shaking out as you'd hoped, just remember that oral rehabilitation is a process, not an event. Like steps on a staircase, you'll take steps and then take a break as you work your way to optimal. Over the childhood years, addressing residual or new needs as they arise is a way of gifting your child with health that lasts a lifetime.



Many moms address the breastfeeding or feeding issues in their children with frenectomies. Most are hoping that they will also address a host of future issues as well. While it's true that snoring, TMJD (temporomandibular joint disease), orthodontic issues and posture are closely correlated with oral restrictions, all of those future issues will not resolve unless the whole person is addressed throughout the early growth years.



Situations like less than ideal healing, neurological imbalances, muscle weaknesses, and mouth breathing are all occurrences that must be worked through. Other concerns like sleep issues, gagging on solids, mouth breathing, and dental arch development are all opportunities to continue guiding your child to optimal growth and development.

By keeping your eyes focused on the GAINS, and a pulse on what is lacking, you can "Ride the Bull" with confidence. Ride and don't get thrown. Ride to win!

**Don't give up! Don't get thrown!**

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