

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Hello everybody. Welcome to Wednesday Live with Dr. Nancy. We should have a big turnout today because of the cold weather. I'm assuming everybody's home, cuddled up in front of the fire with their blankets and their kids, and just waiting to hear about infant reflexology today.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) I have a couple of announcements. First of all, we are in the office. We will be here until six, our normal hours. We've had some patients come in and brave the weather, and we were happy to see them. We've got hot chocolate, coffee, and some gluten-free, dairy-free cookies out here, so if you're needing an adjustment, come on in.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Then, also we are holding a raffle in the office to benefit, it's called Oaklahaven. It's in, I think it's Oklahoma. But it's a clinic for special needs kids, and the doctor down there works on children for free and she's close to an airport, so people fly in and get treatment and they stay there for a little while, and it's all not for profit. She works solely on donations, so right around February 14th time, the chiropractors like to get together and help support her, so we're going to hold a raffle.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Tickets are \$10 and you can win a 60-minute massage. If you just want to give from your heart, we'd appreciate that too, but as an incentive we're selling raffle tickets for \$10 and then the proceeds will go to Oaklahaven. So, if you have a heart and want to help, we may even put a link on our Facebook page if you want to donate from there. We would appreciate you helping out this wonderful doctor who's helping all these kids.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Today, we have Tess Williams, she's a doula. She's going to talk to us a little bit about infant reflexology, but I want her to introduce herself to all of you, and tell us a little bit about yourself.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Welcome, Tess.

[Tess Williams:](#) Well, thank you Dr. Nancy. It's nice to be here. I've been a birth doula for 10 years now. Along my journey, I decided to become certified as a reflexologist because I could see the benefit of how that could a pregnant mom, a woman in labor, and sometimes postpartum. And then, I think it was about a year into my journey that I had a young mother that I had been doula for, who got ahold of me and said, "My baby has horrible colic. We have tried everything. Is there anything you can do?" I went, "Bring him over, I'm going to try."

[Tess Williams:](#) She brought him to my house, and this was a child who didn't even like being in it's car seat. He would scream when they put him in the car seat. He would scream every time they laid him down on his back. So, I said, "Lay him down on the couch." I started rubbing his digestive system and his stomach reflex. When she laid him down, he was just screaming and kicking, and she said, "He really doesn't like being on his back." Babies take very little stimulation because their

nerve endings are right there. I'm rubbing on these, massaging the areas, and he started passing gas.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Oh wow.

[Tess Williams:](#) Within five minutes, we had a smiling, happy baby who was cooing at us. She was like, "Oh my gosh." I thought, "I should probably be doing more of this." So, I showed her. Use hypoallergenic lotion because he's so tiny.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Yeah.

[Tess Williams:](#) And here's what you do. She went back and told some friends, and that kind of got more people coming, going, "Okay, my baby this, my baby that."

[Tess Williams:](#) Sometimes, babies have birth trauma. Because it was a long or difficult birth, there might've been forceps used, sometimes it's an induced birth which produces stronger contractions, sometimes it's a cesarean birth. I had always referred moms who contacted me and said, "My baby's having ... it's like he's in pain. What's going on here?" I've always said, "Okay, let's get him to Dr. Nancy, because she works on newborns."

[Tess Williams:](#) Then, I got doing some further study and it was like, "Well, I know that chiropractic work works wonderfully for colic, for birth trauma, for breastfeeding problems, and it's like, "Okay, sometimes it takes several treatments, and the reflexology is complementary with that because I can massage the areas of the spine, the neck, around the head, that also helps relieve pain and helps the baby to heal more quickly."

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Exactly.

[Tess Williams:](#) That's our goal.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Yes.

[Tess Williams:](#) Like I said, it works great for colic. It also works well if baby's teething. There are reflexes on the top of the head and the top of the toes that relate to the mouth, the jaw, and all this, and we have found that if you are massaging those areas for just a minute, maybe once or twice a day, it helps the baby tremendously with their teething problems.

[Tess Williams:](#) Sometimes because of the way the baby is positioned in the womb, or because of traumatic birth, babies will have ... moms will have breastfeeding problems.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Right.

[Tess Williams:](#) I'm also a lactation specialist. I've had instances where I go visit the mom because she's like, "This baby won't latch. She fights and screams." I go and it's like it's hurting her to be turned that way. The baby would breastfeed off one breast but not off the other. It's like, "Okay, let's get to a chiropractor and get some work done here, and we'll also do some reflexology to help with this, and I will show you where to massage to help this baby release those muscles and that tightness so that we can improve this breastfeeding journey."

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Yeah. For the people that aren't familiar with reflexology, can you explain what it is you're doing, or what it is?

[Tess Williams:](#) I'm basically rubbing feet. He jokes that I birth babies and rub feet.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) I love it. It's as scientific as I get.

[Tess Williams:](#) Yes.

[Tess Williams:](#) The theory behind reflexology is your nerve endings start in your brain, go through down all of your muscles and organs and land on your feet. Babies' feet are particularly sensitive. I wish I had a chart to show you. Wait a minute. Here. Can you see this?

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Go put your foot up there.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) There you go.

[Tess Williams:](#) This is baby's foot. Yes.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) All right. Let me hide your name real quick. Oh.

[Tess Williams:](#) It's okay.

[Tess Williams:](#) The different colored areas on there are different reflexes. For example, this blue area here is lungs. Right up under there are the eyes and ears. Up here are sinuses. Then the pink going across there is the head, neck, et cetera. Down in here where this purple area is, that is the stomach and both feet, the digestive system.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Okay.

[Tess Williams:](#) When you massage those areas, or put acupressure on those areas, it helps release the tension and helps relax the baby and stop the pain, quite frankly. That's kind of what we focus on. It's like babies get sinus infections sometimes.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Yeah.

- [Tess Williams:](#) Work on that. Babies get colds, and when they get congested and their sinuses are congested, it's much harder for them to breastfeed because they can't breathe.
- [Dr. Nancy:](#) Yeah.
- [Tess Williams:](#) We say, "Okay, steam inhalation, blah-blah-blah, but also let's massage these for a minute to five minutes on each foot and that will help the body get back in balance. That's what all alternate medical therapies are, is getting the body back in balance and getting rid of disease."
- [Dr. Nancy:](#) Yes, yes. Amen.
- [Tess Williams:](#) That's what we work on.
- [Dr. Nancy:](#) Yeah. Can you work on a foot and like feel where the area is that's the issue? Do you feel little balls, or do you feel something where you can say, "Oh, they're having a problem in the lower GI," things like that.
- [Tess Williams:](#) Yes. Many times you can on both the adult's foot and the child's foot. Children's feet are much easier, partially because they're smaller, partially because it takes less time, but partially because the nerve endings are right there and you can feel things. We call it tonus, or crystals.
- [Dr. Nancy:](#) Okay.
- [Tess Williams:](#) It's like a little bump there and you go, "Oh. There's where the problem is. Okay, let's work on that a little bit."
- [Dr. Nancy:](#) Oh, nice. Do you teach parents how to do this or do you just do it yourself, or?
- [Tess Williams:](#) Yes. My theory is teach the parent how to do it, because I can't come at two o'clock in the morning and rub your baby's feet. So, you need to know how to do this.
- [Dr. Nancy:](#) Yes.
- [Tess Williams:](#) That's always been my ... it's like, "Okay, we'll do a session. I'll show you how to do this. Let you practice for a minute or so, and then yes, you do this on your baby yourself."
- [Dr. Nancy:](#) Great.
- [Tess Williams:](#) It's kind of like teaching baby massage. We have people that do that.
- [Dr. Nancy:](#) Yeah.

[Tess Williams:](#) I view it the same way.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Okay.

[Tess Williams:](#) The parent needs to know. The advantage of reflexology is you can do it anyplace. You could be in the car and the baby's in the car seat, and you're sitting beside him, do it. If you're out at a picnic, or at the ballpark watching your older child play ball, you can do it right there.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Right.

[Tess Williams:](#) All you have to do is pull the sock or shoe or whatever off and go for it.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) That sounds awesome. And it's on the bottom of the foot, right? Not the top.

[Tess Williams:](#) Well, no, it's not ... You work both sides really.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Okay.

[Tess Williams:](#) Because the top of the foot has got lymph nodes up there, and the face is actually on the big toe, all around the toe nail, so you're working on that and then working on the other nails to help with like teething and things like that. When they're particularly tight in through here after a traumatic birth, that kind of thing.

[Tess Williams:](#) So, yeah. The back of the neck is on the back of the big toe. But, the throat is on the front.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Oh, okay. That makes sense.

[Tess Williams:](#) So, yeah. We work both sides because up around the ankles, if they're having like hip problems, which sometimes babies have, you work around the ankles there to help relieve that. You work up the side of the foot which if this were the big toe, you're going up the side of the foot, finger walking it, and that's the spine. You're really working all areas of the foot. You just don't do it for a long time.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Great. Oh. When you said you were working the head earlier, when we were talking, were you actually working the head or part of the body? Or part of the foot for the head?

[Tess Williams:](#) Okay. For the head, I was working the top of the toes.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Okay. Okay.

[Tess Williams:](#) Then, for the face and the jaw and all this, it's around the side of the big nail and the side of the toe.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Oh, okay.

[Tess Williams:](#) On all the toes.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Okay. I thought reflexology had traveled up to the head when you had talked about that earlier. It was like, "That's new to me."

[Tess Williams:](#) That's okay. There are methodologies, which I have learned, where you can actually do reflexology on the hands or on the ears.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Oh, okay. Yeah.

[Tess Williams:](#) Sometimes for adults, I use those. For a baby, I think it's too intense.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Yeah, I know they don't like it when I touch their ears, either.

[Tess Williams:](#) It's like, "What are you doing?"

[Dr. Nancy:](#) I know. I'm like a psychic. I tell the parent, I go, "They're not going to like this." They've been happy the whole time and then I'm going to go to their ears, they start, "Wah."

[Dr. Nancy:](#) They don't like it.

[Tess Williams:](#) Parents are like, "How'd you know that?"

[Dr. Nancy:](#) I know. I'm psychic.

[Tess Williams:](#) There you go.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Yeah. Hi Anna. She said that you've helped two of her babies with reflexology.

[Tess Williams:](#) Mm-hmm (affirmative).

[Dr. Nancy:](#) That's awesome.

[Tess Williams:](#) With her pregnancy and then helped the babies.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Yeah. She said when they were sick or they were teething, that you've helped her through that. That's awesome.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) She's got a lot of them to practice on.

[Tess Williams:](#) Yes, she does. Yes, she does.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) While we're chatting away, does anybody have any questions for Tess about infant reflexology or even her doula services or lactation questions? Anything like that?

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Do you work out of just one hospital, or do you travel to other hospitals?

[Tess Williams:](#) I go to all hospitals.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Oh, do you?

[Tess Williams:](#) I've been to Lafayette, down to Shelbyville. I actually work for Community Health Network, and I work at all three of their Indianapolis hospitals. But, I also have private clients and wherever that client is birthing, whether it's home, hospital, the birth center, whatever, I go there.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Okay. Great. I just saw a post from the birthing center that they were promoting doulas and how it's important to have a doula, even if you have a midwife that, you know, having a doula there has been ... is great too for support.

[Tess Williams:](#) Mm-hmm (affirmative).

[Tess Williams:](#) Midwives ... I love working with midwives. I have to tell you, because I love natural birth. But, they have a different role. I have a lot of people ask me, "Well, are you a midwife?" I'm like, "No, I'm a birth doula." "Well, what's the difference?" I don't do medical interventions.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Yeah.

[Tess Williams:](#) I'm there for support and comfort, and yeah, reflexology and aromatherapy works into that, but it's a holistic approach. I'm not going to catch a baby.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Right.

[Tess Williams:](#) I don't know how to check a cervix, and I'm not going to try.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Exactly.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) I keep asking for a doula. My daughter's almost 16 now, but I still would like a ... When I heard about this postpartum doula career, I was like, "I would still like one of those." They vacuum and cook, and things that like, right?

[Tess Williams:](#) Uh-huh (affirmative). Yes.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) I'm going to hire somebody.

- [Tess Williams:](#) I think that sounds like an excellent idea. I would have liked to have one when my kids were teenagers.
- [Dr. Nancy:](#) I know. That'd be nice.
- [Tess Williams:](#) Yes.
- [Dr. Nancy:](#) Oh. So, we don't have any questions. Do you have anything else that ... I've got that thing in my face again. Anything else that you'd like to add that I didn't ask you about, or any information you want to share with the parents out there?
- [Tess Williams:](#) I can't really think of much of anything other than just if you realize your child is uncomfortable, then lets try and do something to fix this and help them get better. But, other than that, I'm open for birth.
- [Dr. Nancy:](#) Okay.
- [Dr. Nancy:](#) I threw your website up there. It's covering my mouth. I'll have to go on top of it. I tell you, working with this computer stuff is really interesting. My little box is blocking, so I can't remove my name, so.
- [Tess Williams:](#) Oh my gosh.
- [Dr. Nancy:](#) But her website is gentlehandbirthservices.com for anybody listening on the podcast. Tess is wonderful. I highly recommend her, for anything like birthing, for lactation, for aromatherapy. You are doing it all, I tell you.
- [Tess Williams:](#) Well, thank you.
- [Dr. Nancy:](#) Infant reflexology. Do you ever do workshops on that?
- [Tess Williams:](#) No, I never thought of that. That is a good idea.
- [Dr. Nancy:](#) That would be great. We need to chat. That would be a really neat workshop I think for mom's to learn.
- [Tess Williams:](#) Yeah, it would. I hadn't thought about that. That's a great idea.
- [Dr. Nancy:](#) All right.
- [Tess Williams:](#) Thank you.
- [Dr. Nancy:](#) No problem. We had a workshop a couple of weeks ago and when we were supposed to get all that really bad snow on a Saturday and we canceled it and did a zoom call instead, but then was no snow. We could've totally done it in the

office. But I would love to see an infant reflexology workshop. That'd be really fun.

[Tess Williams:](#) Okay. That would be fun. Lets talk about that later.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Yeah. We'll do that. We still have a few viewers here. You have a lot of fans. Any questions out there for us before we sign off today?

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Everybody's hands are cold so they're not typing so much.

[Tess Williams:](#) They're not typing. Yes.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Yeah. Well, Tess, thank you so much for joining me. I really appreciate it. It was wonderful to talk to you. And to see you. I haven't seen you in a while so this is great.

[Tess Williams:](#) No, I haven't seen you since the Birthing Baby Expo.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Yeah.

[Tess Williams:](#) It was really nice seeing you.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Yes, too. Well, stay warm today, and everybody watching stay warm. Again, we are open, if you need to come in, we'll be here. Have a wonderful, warm day.

[Tess Williams:](#) Thank you.

[Dr. Nancy:](#) Thank you, Tess.