

**This Special Report is presented to you by Aaron Martino
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What to expect at your first massage.

Are you a little nervous about having a massage? You're not alone. Many people are concerned about what happens during a massage. Questions like, Will I have to undress? Do I have to talk? What if I feel uncomfortable? and other questions are common. Here are some answers and suggestions for making your first massage a wonderful experience:

WHAT WILL I BE ASKED?

The massage therapist is likely to ask you about your health; what problems you are looking to treat as well as any conditions that may make certain techniques unsuitable or even unsafe.

Along with health related questions you will also be asked about your preference for comfort. The massage should not make you feel over exposed or uncomfortable. Your massage therapist may also ask you about your preference for scented oils or other options.

While questioning you about your health the massage therapist should also explain the procedure he or she will be using. They should ask you about your sensitivity to determine how deep the massage should be. If you are treating a sore area you may find the massage slightly uncomfortable but otherwise you should not feel pain or discomfort during the massage.

WILL I HAVE TO UNDRRESS?

Exposing the area of your body that is being treated will help the therapist to work more efficiently, however, it is not mandatory to undress. While it is preferable to drape the areas not requiring exposure with a sheet it is possible for the therapist to work on you while you are fully dressed. If you do not feel comfortable without clothing be sure to opt for clothing that is not tight or restrictive as it will interfere with the treatment.

Your massage therapist will give you privacy to undress and provide you sheet or towel to drape over you, both for warmth and privacy. Only the areas worked on will be exposed.

WHAT WILL I HAVE TO DO?

For a typical Swedish massage you will be asked to lie down on a special massage table. This padded table may also have various bolsters to make your position more comfortable. The therapist may ask you to move into a new position for better accessibility to the treated area.

If you are uncomfortable at any time you should tell your massage therapist so you can shift your position or use bolsters to make your position more comfortable.

WHAT WILL THE MASSAGE THERAPIST DO?

Depending on where the massage is being performed and the amount of time available the therapist may dim the lights, play soft music and even light candles.

Oil is often applied to reduce the friction of the massage and you may be asked for your preference of scent. The massage therapist should help you remove the oil before putting your clothes back on so they do not stain.

If you prefer not to talk during your massage you should mention that to the therapist. They will still need to ask you to shift from time to time or ask if the procedure is comfortable but you do not have to converse if you prefer not to.

A good massage therapist should make you feel comfortable enough to ask any questions you have about the procedure and respect your privacy and level of comfort while treating you. Ask for recommendations and meet with the therapist to discuss their methods before booking your appointment.

Massage for BABY?

You've probably heard about how effective massage therapy for infants and babies is by now, but you probably don't know why it is considered so beneficial. Well, although massage therapy has been practiced for a long time, the general public has only recently started to open their minds and hearts to this technique in recent years. It is now known, and proven, that touch therapy and massage helps reduce stress in infants and babies - a baby who is given the massage and touch therapy sleeps deeper and longer.

Massage therapy provides infants and babies with a very nurturing feeling and it is especially helpful for babies with medical or physical problems. The more times they experience your touch, the calmer they will become. The calmer they are, the better they are able to deal with the medical interventions that they have to go through at their young age!

Massage therapy and touch therapy have a lot in common because they have a lot to do with motion of the hands over various parts of the infant's or baby's body. The technique involves a lot of touching, stroking, and massaging of body parts. For adults, massage therapy might even be a little bit on the painful side - but for infants and babies, this is not the case.

For an infant or baby, massage therapy has a lot to do with skin-to-skin contact. This could be something as simple as holding a baby to a naked chest, holding an infant's or baby's hand when the baby is in a cubicle. Some massage therapists offer services of providing massage therapy to infants or babies in a critical or unstable condition. In fact, massage therapy is so well accepted that The International Infant Massage Therapy Association was formed in 1986.

Some nursing professionals offer massage therapy services to babies or infants they deliver. Professional nurses who offer these services will provide the technique to critically or seriously ill babies or infants. These nurses work closely with the baby or infant's doctor and other nurses to ensure that the baby or infant's health is in no way endangered at all.

The most wonderful thing about massage therapy is that it not only benefits the infant or baby, it also benefits the parents or main caregivers. The baby sleeps better, grows faster, while the parents will get an extra few hours sleep each night. Not only will the baby

or infant sleep better, massage therapy could eliminate colic, tummy aches, headaches, and even a stressful day at school or even fever. Seeing the benefits of massage therapy, it is no wonder that there are so many more parents who are open to the idea of using massage therapy for their infant or baby today, as compared to a decade ago.

Babies or infants who are not medically challenged will also benefit from massage therapy. It has been shown that babies or infants who are given massage therapy from an early age tend to grow up more alert, smarter, and healthier in general.

Explore the Health Benefits of Massage Therapy

Massage has been used as a therapy to ease human aches and pains and create relaxation for thousands of years. The instinct to rub and stroke muscles that are tense and tired has been refined and studied so that massage therapy performed by a professionally trained practitioner can promote health and well being, relieve stress and help heal injured areas of your body.

WHAT IS MASSAGE THERAPY GOOD FOR?

Have you thought about seeking massage therapy for healing or relaxation? There are many techniques of massage therapy to choose from. Some therapies, such as those used for athletes, are focused on healing injured tissue by increasing circulation and preventing injury that can be caused by tense muscles.

Other therapies combine massage with soft music, dim lighting and soothing aromatherapy oils to relieve stress and enhance feelings of well being.

Massage therapy can also provide relief from many common ailments from morning sickness to migraines.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF MASSAGE THERAPY?

Massage helps with the circulation of blood and the release of toxins. Massage increases the circulation of oxygen through the body, helping to heal muscles and reduce tension. The increased circulation can also increase lymphatic drainage helping to rid the body of excess fluids and waste.

The physical manipulation of muscles can break down any scar material, thickening or inflammation of the tissues which can

increase mobility and reduce stiffness. The additional mobility and toning can help prevent injury, especially for athletes who use massage therapy as part of their regular training.

Proper techniques of massage therapy can also help relieve constipation and gas and encourage proper digestion.

Relaxation of the physical body can also reduce the effects of stress physiologically. After a session of massage therapy you may feel relaxed, refreshed and feel greater self-esteem.

EASTERN AND WESTERN MASSAGE

The type of therapy you choose will be based on your personal preference or the purpose of the therapy. One of the most common forms of massage is based on Swedish massage which involves the manipulation of the soft tissues of the body with the masseuse's hands. Swedish massage is often used for general relaxation and increasing mobility of the joints but can also be adapted to target specific problems.

The other common form of massage has Eastern origins. These techniques are performed by putting pressure on specific areas of the body with fingers or other blunt objects (acupressure) or needles (acupuncture). These techniques are used to relieve ailments such as: headaches, nausea, depression, pain, digestive disorders as well as stress and other ailments.

There are many variations on these techniques and what appeals to one person may be very different for someone else. Feeling comfortable with the technique as well as the practitioner is important in experiencing the full benefits of the massage. Whatever method you choose you are wise to take time to find the right person for you; determine if the practitioner is trained, qualified, insured and has recommendations before starting treatment and feel comfortable with the setting you will be receiving your massage in.

Bonus Section

Solving the perplexing problem of Back Pain



An estimated eight out of ten people in the United States will injure their back at some point during their lives. Few of these problems will require extended treatment, but back problems are invariably painful.

Managing and relieving back pain is not a simple process. The experience of pain is subjective; it cannot be measured from the outside. Health providers who treat back pain find it challenging to obtain the objective or measurable signs that verify and diagnose a patient's painful back symptoms.

Additionally, everyone's experience of pain is different. Pain descriptors encompass numerous adjectives - dull, sharp, throbbing, pulsating, stabbing and shock-like, just to name a few.

People experience and describe pain so differently partly due to its varied and complex origins. In fact, pain originates from numerous places in the body, such as muscles, bones, nerves, organs or blood vessels.

Pain is also described as acute or chronic. The word "acute" derives from the Latin word for needles and is usually described as a severe, sharp sensation. The initial stage of an injury is called the acute phase.

The word "chronic", on the other hand, originated from the Greek word for time. Chronic pain is pain that persists after a length of time, often months to years. Many back injuries tend to become chronic, especially when not treated properly during the acute phase. Chronic pain is often experienced as a dull ache or constant nagging irritant.

Acute and chronic pain sensations also travel different nervous system pathways inside the body. When you injure muscles or ligaments in your back, nerve endings called pain receptors

pick up the pain impulses and transmit them to the spinal cord. From here, the pain message ascends to the brain. This process takes place at varying rates of speed depending on the size of the nerve fiber involved.

Acute pain tends to travel on faster, larger diameter fibers, while chronic pain prefers smaller, slower pain fibers. Experts suggest that chronic pain affects the brain's limbic system, which is associated with emotional states. Anyone who has ever had a long-term painful injury knows that negative or distressing emotions may accompany or perpetuate the initial injury.

The best way to treat chronic back pain syndromes is to prevent them. Although proficient early treatment does not always prevent an acute injury from turning into a chronic problem, it is a good insurance policy. Early treatment is especially important with injuries to the soft tissues (muscles, tendons and ligaments) to prevent them from becoming weaker, less elastic and more pain-sensitive.

One of the best ways to treat both acute and chronic soft tissue injuries is a hands-on approach that works to repair the injured tissues. Some examples are joint and soft tissue manipulation and mobilization, typically performed by a doctor of chiropractic or osteopath. Other good options are massage and physical therapy. A formal rehabilitation program at a health club or therapy clinic may also help to strengthen weakened and damaged muscles, especially the core stabilizers of the back.

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