

Massage 101

~~GOAL~~

To leave today more knowledgeable than you began and bear practical every-day applications for a better tomorrow.

Why: mental and physical health

Who: create the ongoing conversation – what works, what doesn't, how to work it into everyday life

What not to massage: with contagious disease, on sensitive/burned skin, open wounds, skin disorders & infections

Stroke pressure: indicates intent – how does pressure communicate with your person? What is the goal?

Stroke direction does matter in massage. Massage should be performed in movements going towards the heart, because it helps your circulatory system return blood to your heart and lungs to be re-oxygenated. [note – abdominal massage is clockwise e.i. right to left]

~~NERVES~~

Fingertips – Each fingertip houses approximately 3,000 nerve endings known as Meissner's corpuscles, specifically designed to detect light touch and vibrations. As a result, our fingertips are highly sensitive, enabling us to perceive sensations with exceptional intensity compared to other parts of the body.

Hands - There are a total of 17,000 touch receptors

Feet - Each foot has over 200,000 nerve endings, 107 ligaments and 19 muscles and is a biomechanical marvel of evolution. You will walk in excess of 100,000 miles in your life, with each foot bearing the cumulative load of over a hundred tons a day.

Face – 46,000 touch receptors

~~MUSCLES~~

Massage can produce mechanical pressure, which is expected to increase muscle compliance resulting in increased range of joint motion, decreased overall stiffness and better sleep.

Muscle Knot - a sensitive, hardened spot on your muscle (e.i. trigger point) that can trap lactic acid. The tense muscle fibers may cause muscle aches. And they can be active or latent. An active trigger point hurts even when you aren't touching it.

Knot Cause – an abundance of acetylcholine and calcium in the muscle fibers inhibits oxygen to the area causing the fibers to contract and creating a knot.

MaSSage 101

~~HOW~~

Stroke styles:

Effleurage: soft, continuous stroking movement

Petrissage: kneading movement that stimulates underlying tissues

Friction – a rubbing movement

Tapotement – fast tapping, patting & hacking

Vibration – rapid shaking movement

Shoulders/upper back – traps:

Warm up: friction and long strokes to increase blood flow

Grab front of trap – position thumbs on back trap – squeeze upward – hold for 3 second

Release – move fingers up and squeeze again.

Then both hands on same side – grab front then back and squeeze

Arms:

C- Clamp – create a C with one hand, hold firmly to wrist with the opposite hand, then steady stroke up arm.

Inner wrist – use on larger muscles

Hands:

Pull apart with both hands and stroke with side of hands.

Tai hand grip: interlace fingers – stretch palm apart, then use thumbs to pull palm muscles apart

Finger compression and gentle tug

Feet:

Pull apart with both hands and stroke with thumbs

Work the way up from heel to toes – covering the entire area (reflexology/nerve calming)

Move into ankles with a circular ankle wrap motion then up the calf.

Face & Neck:

Very light touch – follow facial lines (tracing) – around eyes, eyebrows, jawline

Medium touch – TMJ (temporomandibular joint and temples)

Ears:

Light circular rubbing between fingertips from ear lobe to the top of the ear

Mid-low back:

Long motions using inner wrist/arm for more pressure

Stretching from top to bottom – focusing on areas of stiffness

~~Bonus Tip~~

Add sensuality to any massage

Incorporate music - Slow down – steady the touch – use back of hand as well as palm