



How to massage

Massage is a wonderful, healthful, inspiring, rejuvenating experience. But how you massage and where you massage make all the difference. We have all received massages that have made us feel wonderful afterwards; but unfortunately most of us have also received a few massages that have been woefully lame. To prevent this from happening you need to know what it is you want from a massage and take the right steps to make that happen. Here are some tips to help you create your best massage experience:

1. Ask yourself - What are my goals for receiving massage?
2. ***Relaxation and Stress Relief Massage*** – If relaxation is what you want to achieve – then you are looking for a therapist who is trained in one of the following:
 - SWEDISH MASSAGE:*** The long, gliding, effleurage strokes of Swedish massage help calm the nerves and improve blood circulation. Creating an full body sense of “Ahh’
 - REIKI:*** Is an energetic therapy, that uses minimal to no touch, but instead taps into the bodies energy field to create balance and peace. A few other therapies in this family are – Somato-Emotional Release Therapy, Zero-Balancing and EFT.
 - REFLEXOLOGY:*** This technique typically focuses on the feet, but can also be performed on the hands or ears. The idea is that all the bodies’ nerves terminate in one of these 3 locations, with specific points designated to specific parts of the body. Thus you could actually receive a full body massage just by performing massage on one of these areas.
3. ***Therapeutic Massage*** - Are you having pains? If you are having pains where are they? If you are having pain here are a few modalities that your therapist could be trained in order to really help you:
 - TRIGGER POINT THERAPY:*** focuses on applying pressure to small areas of spasmed muscle called ‘trigger points’. By applying pressure to these spots you can stop pain and alleviate dysfunction throughout the affected area.
 - MYOFASCIAL RELEASE THERAPY:*** Works on releasing the stress, tension and adhesion in the body’s own cellophane-like wrapping called Fascia. When this fascia becomes tight and adhered it prevents normal muscle function, as well as blood and nerve circulation – creating pain and limiting range of motion. Once released the body is set free!A few more therapies that are effective are – Neuromuscular Release (deep technique), Lymphatic Drainage (works on lymphatic circulation; it is a gentle technique), Rolfing (very deep technique), Cranio-Sacral Therapy (gentle technique that balances the nervous system and the body)



4. **Communicate**: Once in your massage, always communicate with your therapist. This is *your* massage, never be shy to speak up – you will NOT offend your therapist. Pain and discomfort are individual experiences, even the most skilled therapist cannot tell you how you feel. Make sure to share with your therapist if their pressure too hard or soft, if the music is too loud or soft, if the temperature is uncomfortable, and always let the therapist know if you want to be silent in the massage or if you would like to chat.
5. **Breathe** – Breathing is the corner stone of a good massage session. Our body is intimately linked to our breath. By slowing your breath down, and taking deep inhales, and deep exhales, you allow your body to enter a very relaxed space where it can begin to receive the therapeutic benefits of the massage. Your therapist will also use the rhythm of your breath to coordinate their massage strokes to so that your body can respond even more effectively to the work.
6. **Drink Water** – Water is very important after a massage. When a therapist works on your body – circulation is increased throughout your body, promoting a very detoxifying effect. If you do not drink sufficient water after your massage (even a gentle massage) could leave you feeling sore, and even a little sick up to 24hrs after your service.
7. **Soreness**– It is not unusual to feel a little sore 24 – 48hrs after your massage. This is because your therapist has spent time stretching the tissues throughout your body – it’s a little bit like a post work-out experience.