



# Body Sense

A public education magazine brought to you by ABMP

winter 2016

## Discover the Many Types of Massage & Bodywork

*Check out the guide  
inside to find the right  
approach for you!*

**Perfect Your  
Massage Experience**

**Effective Touch for  
Fibromyalgia Sufferers**

**“Sometimes I fall asleep during  
my massage. Is this OK?”**



  
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## EDITOR'S NOTE

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Body Sense Editor Darren Buford

## Enjoy the Journey

If you've never received a massage, or have had only minimal exposure to its many benefits, then we invite you to use this issue of *Body Sense* magazine as your

personal entrée into the world of touch and bodywork. On pages 8–11 of this issue, you'll find a flowchart and guide to use as starting points to getting either your first massage or trying a new technique. The 24 handpicked modalities are a window into our world and offer an example of the great breadth this field has to offer you for your wellness needs. And, while there are so many more modalities to delve into (more than 200 are listed on [www.massagetherapy.com](http://www.massagetherapy.com)!), we hope this issue offers you a place to start (or continue) your bodywork journey. May it be an ongoing and never-ending quest toward good health.



US consumers spent more than \$31 billion on gift cards in 2014. In fact, according to a National Retail Federation consumer survey, gift cards are the most requested gift item during the holiday season for eight years in a row. Check with your therapist for gift card options now, and throughout the year.

## Body Sense

massage, bodywork & healthy living

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## BODY TALK

### Alternative Therapies Have High Potential for Pain Management

A review conducted by the US National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health found that complementary therapies such as massage therapy, yoga, and acupuncture have high potential for managing chronic pain.

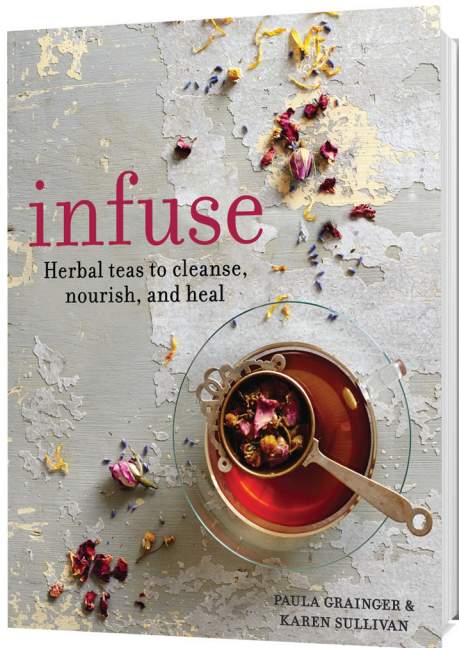
The review included evidence from randomized, controlled clinical trials from 1996 to March 2016. The researchers gathered evidence on the efficacy, effectiveness, and safety of seven widely used alternative therapies or groups of therapies: massage therapy, acupuncture, spinal or osteopathic manipulation, tai chi, yoga, relaxation techniques including meditation, and selected natural product supplements.

Researchers found the following approaches resulted in more positive than negative outcomes for helping people manage chronic pain conditions:

- Massage therapy for neck pain—with adequate doses and for short-term benefit.
- Acupuncture and yoga for back pain.
- Acupuncture and tai chi for osteoarthritis of the knee.
- Relaxation techniques for severe headaches and migraine.

The study was published in the September 2016 issue of *Mayo Clinic Proceedings*.





### INFUSE: HERBAL TEAS TO CLEANSE, NOURISH, AND HEAL

Experts Paula Grainger and Karen Sullivan detail creative herbal blends for circulation, digestion, rejuvenation, sleep, soothing the nervous system, calming the mind, and much more. More than 70 recipes for caffeine-free infusions—as well as a directory of herbal ingredients and their active properties and benefits—help you blend, brew, and sip your way to well-being. Available for \$16.99 at [www.octopusbooks.com](http://www.octopusbooks.com).

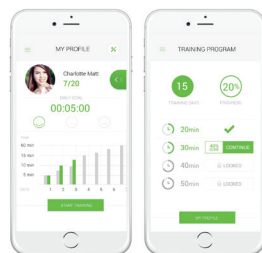
### CRYSTAL COLLECTION CANDLES

These candles are infused with genuine crystals, combined in a way that helps release the crystal's properties and energies. Fragrances are blended with essential oils, and each candle will burn an average of 80 hours. Available with amethyst, aquamarine, bloodstone, citrine, rose quartz, and tiger eye and presented in a 13-ounce glass tumbler with brushed metal lid. Retail for \$30 at [www.southernrivercandleco.com](http://www.southernrivercandleco.com).



### UPRIGHT POSTURE TRAINER

This wearable technology helps people improve the way they sit and stand. Upright is a small device that attaches to the lower back and employs smart sensors to vibrate when the user slouches. With nearly nine hours a day spent sitting, 40 percent of Americans experience head, back, or neck pain—and the leading cause is poor posture. Available for \$129.95 at [www.uprightpose.com](http://www.uprightpose.com).



## ASK THE EXPERTS

# Q&A

### “On occasion, I fall asleep during my massage. Is this OK?”

Absolutely! Bodywork sessions are intended to give you what you need to restore your body and mind, and that often includes getting a little extra shut-eye. And let's face it, most massage environments are designed to be incredibly relaxing and sleep-inducing. Many therapists actually consider it a compliment when a client falls asleep because it means you trust them enough to completely let down your guard while they work. They may need you to stay awake, though, if they're giving a more focused treatment session and using techniques that require you to participate by moving a body part to



Kristin Coverly, LMT, is a massage therapist and educator for Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals.

facilitate the work. The downside of falling asleep? Some clients do express regret at not being awake to experience how wonderful it feels to receive the work.



### “The winter months are here. What can I do to protect myself from dry skin?”

Dry skin can result in flaky, rough surface texture and a feeling of tightness and even itchiness. If left untreated, dry skin can become inflamed and lead to redness and discomfort. Dry skin does not directly cause wrinkling, but it can definitely make these aging symptoms look worse.

To protect yourself:

- Use gentle exfoliants to remove dead, dry surface cells.
- Choose products appropriate for the individual skin type.
- Try a hydrating facial treatment, which can boost moisture and speed recovery.
- Drink your water.



Skin Care Educator/  
Product Developer/  
Therapist/Author, Mark  
Lees, PhD, MS, CIDESCO

# Find the Right Massage & Bodywork Therapies for You!

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Massage therapy is a beautiful mosaic of modalities offering something for everyone. From all ages to most conditions, there's a bodywork fit. For instance:

- Massage therapy is one of the leading solutions for low-back pain in the United States.
- Conditions ranging from autism to fibromyalgia can benefit from appropriate bodywork.
- Oncology massage is one of the most popular specialties and is increasingly being integrated into holistic treatment plans.

What's most important is what massage therapy can do for you. There's nothing like a one-hour Swedish massage—the most popular form of bodywork offered—to reconnect you with your inner self, invigorate your body, and help you refocus on self-care, but have you ever tried another modality like lymph massage or reflexology?

Following is a guide to help you explore the many types of bodywork. Use the flowchart on the next pages and the corresponding glossary to learn about massage and bodywork for the first time, or to branch out and try something new from the hundreds of touch therapy options.

With so many types of massage and bodywork, chances are your massage therapist has the training and intuition to be able to adapt the work to fit where you are in your life and in your body.

And, if you ever need more information or guidance, be sure to visit [www.massagetherapy.com](http://www.massagetherapy.com), where we have definitions for every modality and the ability to find a practitioner near you who practices each one of them.

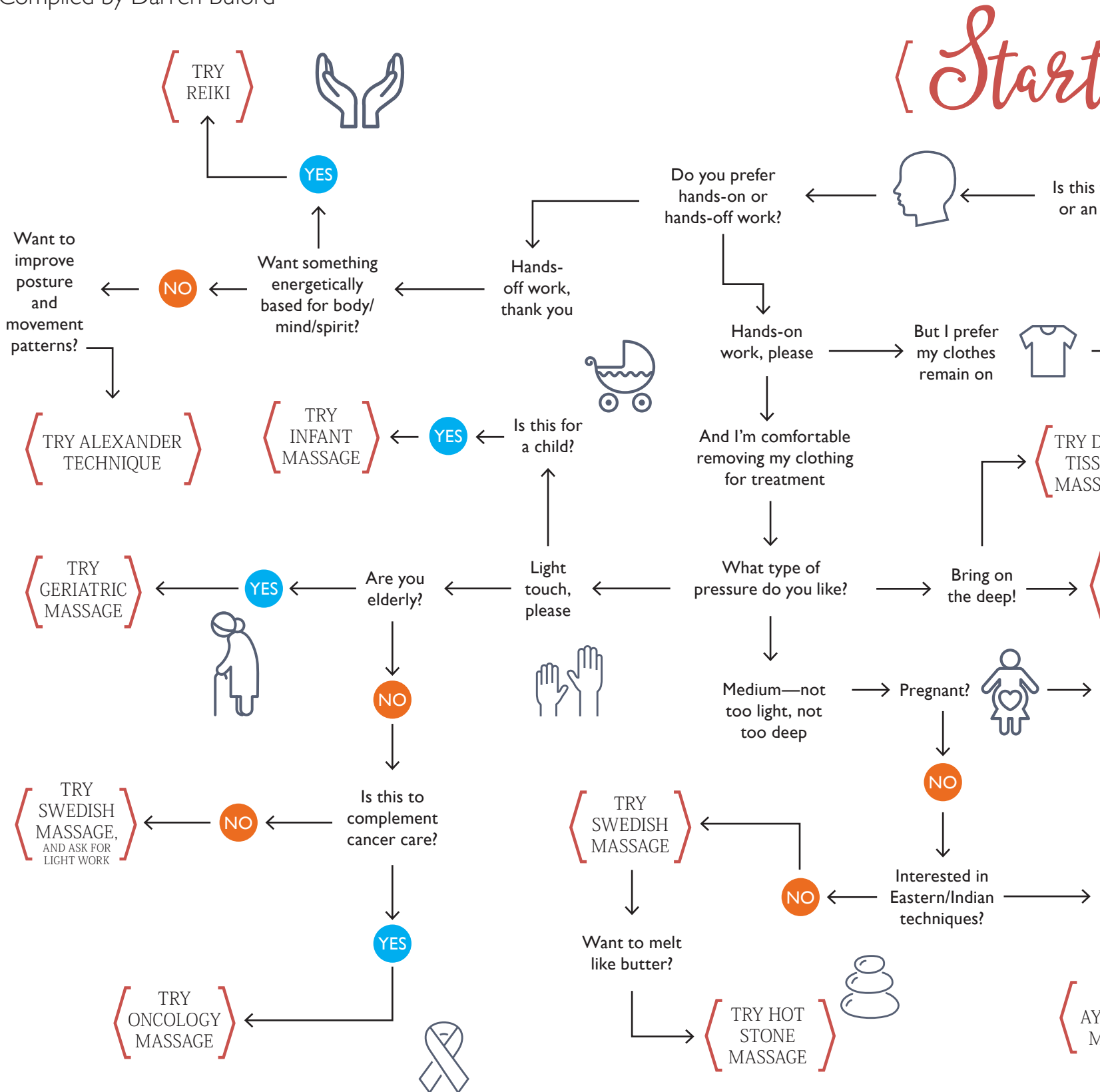
We hope you enjoy the journey on the following pages!

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# What's Your Massage & Bodywork Style

Compiled by Darren Buford



\* All techniques are not mutually exclusive. Many can be used in conjunction with one another. Also, several can be delivered to clothed or unclothed clients including geriatric, oncology, prenatal, and sports massage, among others.

\* Although not illustrated here, acupressure and aromatherapy can be combined with most modalities above. For more detailed definitions, visit [www.massagetherapy.com](http://www.massagetherapy.com).



le? Try this fun approach to discovering  
 the many types of therapeutic touch.

here}

for a person  
 animal/pet?



Looking for something  
 in the realm of  
 energy medicine for  
 body/mind/spirit?

DEEP  
 TISSUE  
 MASSAGE

NO

Do you want  
 to be active in  
 the therapeutic  
 process?



NO

In a hurry?

TRY  
 NEUROMUSCULAR  
 THERAPY

YES

TRY  
 PRENATAL/  
 PREGNANCY  
 MASSAGE

YES

Are you OK with a multiple  
 session commitment?

YES

TRY STRUCTURAL  
 INTEGRATION

TRY  
 MYOFASCIAL  
 RELEASE

Are you an athlete  
 needing injury recovery  
 or ongoing maintenance?

TRY SPORTS  
 MASSAGE



Light touch?

TRY  
 CRANIOSACRAL  
 THERAPY

TRY LYMPH  
 MASSAGE

Do you want  
 full-body work?

NO

TRY TRIGGER  
 POINT THERAPY



TRY THAI  
 MASSAGE

TRY  
 AYURVEDIC  
 MASSAGE

YES





# Types of Massage & Bodywork

## ACUPRESSURE

Uses the gentle but firm pressure of fingers, elbows, or feet to press key points on the surface of the skin to stimulate the body's natural self-curative abilities. When points are pressed, they release muscular tension and promote circulation of blood and the body's life force (*chi* or *qi*) to aid healing.

## ALEXANDER TECHNIQUE

Movement education in which the student is taught to sit, stand, and move in ways that reduce physical stress. Teachers use gentle manual guidance and verbal cues to improve posture and movement patterns. Teacher's guidance stresses the adjustment of the head, neck, and torso relationship. At first, teachers closely monitor students. Later, students learn a self-management process.

## ANIMAL MASSAGE

Therapeutic massage provides relief, stimulates healing, and promotes stress reduction in both pets and competition animals. Benefits include enhancing performance by increasing range of motion, maintaining muscle tone and joint flexibility, increasing blood and lymph circulation, increasing oxygen to reduce muscle spasms, and improving disposition.

## CRANIOSACRAL THERAPY

A light-touch, noninvasive method of enhancing the craniosacral system, which consists of membranes and cerebrospinal fluid that surround and protect the brain and spinal cord. Encourages the body's natural healing mechanisms to improve functioning of the central nervous system, dissipate stress, and enhance health.

## DEEP-TISSUE MASSAGE

Administered to affect the sublayer of musculature and fascia. Helps with chronic muscular pain and injury rehabilitation and reduces inflammation-related pain caused by arthritis and tendinitis. Generally integrated with other massage techniques.

## GERIATRIC MASSAGE

Addresses the psychological and physiological aspects of aging and its associated diseases. Bodywork, often limited to a shorter time span, is often performed in residential care facilities and can be administered with the client in their wheelchair or bed, depending on their level of mobility.

## MYOFASCIAL RELEASE

Application of sustained pressure and movement into the body's fascial system to eliminate restrictions and emotional patterns that impede progress. Begins by visually analyzing the body's frame, followed by palpation of fascial layers. Gentle pressure is applied in the direction of restrictions. Effective for cervical and back pain, fibromyalgia, scoliosis, neurological dysfunction, and headaches.

## NEUROMUSCULAR THERAPY

Soft-tissue manipulation that balances the body's central nervous system with the musculoskeletal system. Based on neurological laws that explain how the central nervous system initiates and maintains pain, the goal is to help relieve pain and dysfunction by understanding and alleviating the underlying cause.

## ONCOLOGY MASSAGE

Massage tailored to the needs of individuals with cancer. Therapists pay close attention to the physical, emotional, and psychological needs of clients in all stages of cancer—diagnosis, treatment, recovery, survivor, or terminal—and include precautions for radiation, chemotherapy, and surgery, and cover physiology and pathology.

## REFLEXOLOGY

Involves application of pressure to specific reflex areas in the foot, hands, and ears that correspond to other parts of the body. Stimulates body organs and relieves areas of congestion through increased circulation of blood and lymphatic fluids. Works with the body's energy flow to stimulate self-healing and maintain body balance.

## SPORTS MASSAGE

Designed to enhance athletic performance and recovery pre-event, post-event, and for injury treatment. Often delivered at the performance site, with the athlete fully clothed. Pre-event: fast-paced and stimulating; helps to establish blood flow and warm up muscles. Post-event: the intent is to calm the nervous system and reduce recovery time.

## STRUCTURAL INTEGRATION

A 10-session cycle of work in which different angles and degrees of physical pressure are used to stretch and guide the myofascial system—the ligaments, muscles, tendons, and surrounding connective tissues—to a place of easier movement. The goal is to create a more resilient, higher-energy system, free of inhibitions due to past trauma.

Compiled by  
Darren Buford

## AROMATHERAPY

Use of essential oils (extracted from herbs, flowers, resin, woods, and roots) to aid in relaxation, improve circulation, and help healing of wounds. Diffusers are used to fill the massage room with the scent of oils. Specific essential oils are added to carrier oils to be used during the massage. Each oil has its own unique characteristics and benefits.

## AYURVEDIC MASSAGE

Part of the traditional detoxification and rejuvenation program of India called *panchakarma*, in which large amounts of warm oil and herbs are vigorously massaged into the entire body or poured at specific energy points called *chakras*. Techniques can be done either as stand-alone treatments or in conjunction with a full-body massage.

## CHAIR MASSAGE

Involves the use of a specially designed massage chair the client sits comfortably in. Includes bodywork and somatic techniques, such as shiatsu, amma, and Swedish massage, provided to the fully clothed client in a variety of settings, including businesses, airports, and street fairs.

## HEALING TOUCH

An energy-based therapeutic approach that uses touch to influence the energy system, thus affecting physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual health, as well as healing. The goal is to restore harmony and balance in the energy system to help the person self-heal. The quality and impact of the healing is influenced by the relationship between the giver and receiver.

## HOT STONE MASSAGE

Use of smooth, heated stones as an extension of the practitioner's own hands to massage the body. The heat can provide relaxation benefits and bring relief to tight muscles so therapists can work deeper.

## LYMPH MASSAGE

Practitioners palpate the lymphatic flow (part of the circulatory system). Advanced practitioners map the lymphatic flow to find alternate pathways for drainage. Evolved from years of training in traditional medicine, Asian medical practices, and manual therapies.\*

## POLARITY THERAPY

A clothes-on, noninvasive system complementing existing modalities with an integrated, holistic model. Based on the belief that positive and negative poles exist in every cell, the body is gently manipulated to balance the positive and negative energies. In addition to physical manipulation, blockages are eliminated through a cleansing diet and simple exercises.

## PRENATAL/PREGNANCY

Prenatally, specific techniques can reduce pregnancy discomforts and enhance the physiological and emotional well-being of mother and fetus. Facilitates labor, shortening labor times and easing pain and anxiety. In the postpartum period, rebalances structure, physiology, and emotions of the new mother and may help with mother-child bonding.

## REIKI

An energy healing art. Practitioners access and serve as a channel for life force (*chi* or *qi*) by placing their hands on or just above the client's body to activate healing energy within receptive points. Then they move progressively with a passive touch through 12 positions, remaining at each for 3–5 minutes. As the flow of energy is strengthened, healing occurs.

## SWEDISH MASSAGE

The most well-known, practiced, and experienced massage modality. Designed to energize the body by stimulating circulation. Five basic strokes, all flowing toward the heart, are used to manipulate the soft tissues of the body. Therapists use a combination of kneading, rolling, vibrational, percussive, and tapping movements, with the application of oil.

## THAI MASSAGE

Practiced on a firm mat on the floor instead of on a table, and instrumental in the effective use of the practitioner's body weight. Except for the feet, the client remains fully clothed. Also involves peripheral stimulating, meaning it acts as an external stimulant to produce specific internal effects. This point serves as the main division between Thai and Western massage.

## TRIGGER POINT MYOTHERAPY

Noninvasive modality for the relief of myofascial pain and dysfunction. Consists of trigger-point compression, myomassage, passive stretching, and corrective exercises. Intended to reduce pain and increase range of motion, strength, and endurance.

# Your Massage

## How to Perfect the Experience

By Cath Cox, LMT



Massage is a highly personal service, because each client's needs are unique. What one person loves, the next may not. Knowing what to ask prior to booking, being prepared for your appointment, and communicating with your therapist during the session improves the chances that you'll be happy with the massage you receive.

### **BEFORE THE SESSION**

#### **How Long Will It Last?**

Knowing how much treatment time you'll be getting is the first step to deciding what you want. Many 1-hour sessions are actually 50 minutes of hands-on massage time with 5 minutes before to discuss your expectations, priorities, and concerns, and 5 minutes after for you to get dressed and leave the room so the therapist can set up for their next appointment. If you're unsure how much massage time you're entitled to, call for verification. In many instances, sessions can be lengthened to accommodate more relaxation time or more focus on a particular area.

#### **What Are Your Goals?**

Once you know how much time you'll receive, determine your goals for the session. This attention to detail prior to booking is key to getting the experience you're looking for.

- What is it you want from your massage?
- Is your priority to zone out and relax, or to resolve pain?
- Is it more important you receive a full-body massage or that the therapist address specific areas on your body that need more attention?
- Are you open to energy work and more subtle forms of the healing arts, or do you prefer a more straightforward, traditional approach?

It's important to consider these questions before you make your appointment because different goals require different treatment methods. Here are some other things to consider as well:

- If you want a full-body massage with some extra time on a problem area, 50 minutes may not be enough to accomplish that.
- Deeper work usually takes more time, since each layer of muscle must let go before the one under it can be reached.
- A chronic injury that has persisted for years may take several sessions to address.

Being realistic about your expectations will make your experience better.

### Prep Work

Check out your therapist's website for their bio. Most massage therapists receive the same basic training but develop varied specialties and passions once in practice. Also, look for an online intake form to complete before your appointment. If there isn't an intake form on the website, chances are you'll have one to fill out once you arrive. It's wise to be 10 minutes early for your first appointment so you don't miss out on any massage time doing paperwork.

After you've gone over the intake form together and answered a few questions, you should be informed about the plan for your session. If you're unclear about what type of massage you'll receive, ask something like, "So will I be getting a full-body massage or will just my back or other areas be addressed?" Establish a plan with your therapist that you both agree to. If you need clarification about what you should do once your therapist leaves the room, ask to what


level you should get undressed. Some techniques can be more fully approached and effective if you completely remove your clothing—but always only undress to your level of comfort; therapists can always adjust their techniques.

### WHAT SHOULD YOU EXPECT DURING YOUR SESSION?

A full-body Swedish and relaxation massage generally includes neck, back, arms, hands, legs, and feet (left, right, front, and back). This means that each area will receive 3–5 minutes of massage during a 50-minute session. If that doesn't sound like enough time for you, you should be able to book a longer session, add more time to a gift certificate and pay the difference (this should be done when you make your appointment), or request a partial-body massage from your therapist. Common examples of partial-body requests are just the back of the legs and torso or upper body only. You may be asked if you are comfortable having your upper chest and gluteal muscles worked on. Simply be honest about whether work in those areas is OK or if it makes you uncomfortable. Most massages don't include abdominal work, so if that's something you want, you should ask for it. Scalp and face work may also be optional, so be sure to request those if you'll miss them should they be left out.

### KEEP COMMUNICATING

During your massage, ask for what you need. If the pressure doesn't feel effective or hurts too much, don't be shy about asking for changes. Keep communicating until you're satisfied. Every client is different, so if this is your first time working with your therapist, they may not immediately know what feels right to you. If the work on an area of your body you really want addressed feels like it is over but you want more time spent there, ask if there will be more time spent there later on in the massage. If the answer is no, ask for more. This may mean your session plan will change.

If your therapist asks for feedback, be honest. Expecting them to know you don't like something is not rational. Telling your therapist anything other than what you think they want to hear may be awkward, but that's how they learn what works for you. Taking the time to consider what you want from a massage and being willing to ask for it pays off. You'll leave feeling good and confident that your time and money were well spent. Receiving the bodywork that's right for you allows you to reap all the therapeutic benefits you deserve to feel your best. 

*Cath Cox has been a licensed massage therapist in Colorado since 1999. Her experience includes working in a spa, a franchise, and wellness center environments. She currently provides ashatsu barefoot massage in private practice.*

If your therapist asks for feedback, be honest. Expecting them to know you don't like something is not rational.



# How Bodywork Eases Fibromyalgia Pain

By Karrie Osborn

The ache. The pain. The foggy brain.

With fibromyalgia, most mornings pose a challenge—finding the will to get out of bed and move forward with life can be daunting for those in the clutches of this debilitating chronic pain disorder.

There not only is no cure, there also is no agreement about what causes fibromyalgia. Yet, despite the pain and frustration so many experience with this condition, some have found significant relief under the gentle hands of a massage therapist or bodyworker.

## WHAT CAUSES FIBROMYALGIA?

Fibromyalgia affects an estimated 10 million Americans, according to the National Fibromyalgia Association (NFA), and costs US consumers up to \$14 billion each year to treat.

Although researchers have been studying fibromyalgia for decades, there is still no definitive cause for the painful condition. Yet, most experts agree that fibromyalgia pain is due to a hiccup in the central nervous system, where the sensation of pain is processed abnormally, thereby heightening its intensity. Beyond that, experts have claimed everything from genetics to simple breathing pattern disorders could play a role in the hows and whys of the condition.

Ginevra Liptan, MD, cofounder of the Frida Center for Fibromyalgia, says *stress response* may be a factor. She explains that fascia, the connective tissue that “surrounds, supports, and gives form to all other tissues of the body,” and densely covers each muscle and muscle fiber, is highly innervated. Researchers think it’s this tissue that gives humans enormous

extra strength in emergencies (when a mother lifts a car to rescue her child, for example). Liptan says when we get *stuck*, for whatever reason, in that highly stressful place of fight-or-flight response, the nervous system stays activated and the fascia stays contracted, even when the stressor is gone. This, Liptan believes, is what creates the widespread muscle pain and tenderness seen in fibromyalgia.

## BEYOND THE DIAGNOSIS

While research helps us learn more about fibromyalgia every day, there are still many sufferers who have their pain questioned, either by family and friends, or even more upsetting, their health-care providers. Whether it be because of the vagueness of the condition’s cause, the lack of proper diagnostic protocols, or misconceptions about the condition itself, some people don’t believe in a fibromyalgia diagnosis and don’t think of it as a real illness. The sadness and frustration of not being believed only exacerbates the condition and can lead to depression and other issues.

“I was diagnosed with fibromyalgia in my 40s, when very few people had ever heard of it,” says 76-year-old Karen Floyd from Colorado. “I had to go through several medical experts before I was diagnosed to find out it really wasn’t all in my head.” While no one wants to have fibromyalgia, sometimes a diagnosis gives legitimacy to the pain.


Beyond the diagnosis, the fibromyalgia sufferer works hard to find what helps them feel better and what makes them feel worse. For some, acupuncture helps; for others, a change in diet calms symptoms. For many, hands-on therapies like massage offer significant relief.

## HOW CAN MASSAGE HELP?

While fibromyalgia forced Floyd to quit working for a few years, she now uses massage to help manage her symptoms. “When I am really hurting, I get an hour massage every week and as I improve, I get one a month to maintain.”

For those who suffer from fibromyalgia, receiving massage or bodywork might seem like the last thing you’d look to for relief when even the *thought* of being touched creates stress. But working your soft tissues is actually the way to address the tightened fascia that Liptan thinks is such a critical piece of the fibromyalgia puzzle.

The caveat here is the kind of therapeutic touch clients choose to receive. While it might sound tempting to some, fibromyalgia sufferers should not seek out deep massage work, as this can trigger the nervous system and cause a flare-up of symptoms. Gentle, slow, sustained pressure is the key, and there are a variety of hands-on modalities that can help. The goal is to calm the sympathetic nervous system and let those contracted tissues break out of their stressed state.

Fibromyalgia sufferers turn to a variety of techniques and therapies to ease their aches and pains. Ultimately, finding the right combination involves personal choice and experience. But adding massage to that menu of options is worthy of consideration if you’re fighting fibromyalgia. As researchers from a 2015 study found, “Most styles of massage therapy consistently improve the quality of life of fibromyalgia patients.” 

*Karrie Osborn is senior editor for Body Sense magazine.*



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## Combating Fibromyalgia Symptoms

Research has found that several hands-on therapies can be extremely beneficial to combat fibromyalgia, including: myofascial release, connective tissue massage, craniosacral therapy, manual lymphatic drainage, and shiatsu. *Remember: do **not** pursue deep massage work if you suffer from fibromyalgia—slow, gentle, sustained pressure is the key.*



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