

## Ground and Center Therapeutic Massage



### New to Massage Therapy? Here are some of the ins and outs...

Some suggestions on how to prepare for a massage:

- Try and relax your body and mind. If possible, take a warm bath or shower and use the restroom before your massage session
- Drink plenty of water
- Eat lightly just before a massage
- Reduce caffeine intake
- Focus on yourself and your treatment goals

Before your massage therapy session, you will be required to complete an intake form, which includes a health history. This information is a necessary tool for massage therapists because it spotlights any illnesses or injuries that may be affected by massage. Be as thorough as possible. It is important to provide information about specific areas you would like worked on or areas that you want the massage therapist to avoid.

After the massage therapist reviews the health history information, a short interview will be conducted to address your session goals. This helps the therapist design the session and tailor it to your needs and expectations. Please discuss any apprehensions or concerns you may have. This will help establish clear and healthy boundaries for both you and the therapist. The therapist will explain what the massage session will entail. Provide feedback if there's something you are unsure of or question.

Following the short interview, the therapist will leave the room so you can prepare for your massage session.

#### A note about disrobing:

Disrobing is an option; however, depending on the type of massage being administered, disrobing can be beneficial to the patient and the therapist. Working directly on the body allows the therapist to assess the muscles and determine which areas may be causing discomfort to you. The massage techniques used will also feel better for the patient. Generally, for a full body massage, most patients disrobe completely but leave their underwear on. This is entirely your call – everyone's comfort zone is different. Keep in mind that the therapist is trained to use draping methods to keep the client's modesty level respected. Only the area being worked on will be exposed.

After you have disrobed, lie down on the table under the covers in the position the therapist determined following the assessment (laying face down on your stomach with your face in the face cradle – prone position; or on your back with your head resting on massage table – supine position). The therapist will knock before entering the room to ensure you are ready to begin the massage. Initially, light touch will be used to establish comfort and connect with the patient. As the massage progresses the amount of pressure may change, but should never get to a point that is excessively painful or uncomfortable.

The following are some common responses that may occur during massage, which are normal to relaxation. Trust your body to express what it needs to.



need to move or change position



sighing



yawning



change in breathing



stomach gurgling



emotional release



movement of intestinal gas



energy shifts



falling asleep



memories

After the massage, the therapist will leave the room so you can dress privately. It is a good idea to remain on the table for a short time to allow the body's systems to balance. Depending on the type of massage administered, there are a number of physiological and emotional changes you may experience, ranging from relaxation to invigoration. The massage experience is different for everyone.

**Communication is key to getting your needs met.** If the room is too warm, if the bolster under your legs isn't in the right spot, if the music is bothersome--whatever the issue, speak up about anything that diminishes your enjoyment and ability to focus on your session. Clients must take the lead and let therapists know if a particular treatment or something else within the session is uncomfortable.

The massage therapist will occasionally check in with you during your session, inquiring about pressure and comfort. Be sure and let the therapist know if you're not feeling well, if that spot on your calf is too tender, or even if you can't hold your need for a bathroom break any longer.

A professional massage is more than an ordinary backrub. Your massage therapist can find all the kinks that have built up from daily stress and too little or too much exercise. The whole point of a therapeutic massage is to release that tension, work out the kinks and help your body relax so it can function at an optimal level. All of this work stretches muscles, pushes blood into them and gets things working again. Your body is made up of complex systems that react to changing external factors. Maintain good health practices and keep your mind free of negative clutter. Drink plenty of water immediately following your treatment, and continue to do so for the next day or two to rehydrate your tissues. Relax and allow your body to find its balance naturally. Like exercise, make bodywork a habitual practice for good health. And if you wake up the next morning a little sore, it's probably because you had a really good massage.

This covers the basic massage routine. Remember that the massage is tailored to your needs. Whether it is for relaxation and rejuvenation or injuries and illnesses...it will always be YOURS.

***Relax, Heal, and Enjoy***