

Types of Massage

If you are new to massage therapy, you may not know the difference between deep tissue & Swedish massage, or what exactly is a sports massage? This section will explain the difference in technique and help you choose the best type of massage for your specific needs.

Swedish Massage - Generally, a relaxing massage. Only the superficial muscles are manipulated, but the effect is felt through the body. Promotes deep relaxation & stress relief. Many times aromatherapy and soft lighting will be used to promote deep relaxation. May be incorporated with deep tissue massage for a more intense relaxation massage.

Deep Tissue Massage - Deep Tissue massage is fancy term for working parallel to the fibers of individual muscles. Doing this allows the therapist to work deeper to decrease the density of the muscle, to work out deep knots & tension. The use of deep tissue is widespread - anyone from homemakers to professional athletes request this type of massage when experience muscle pain and/or soreness. May be incorporated with deep tissue and/or neuromuscular therapy to rehabilitate soft tissues.

Neuromuscular Therapy - Neuromuscular Therapy, or NMT, is a type of massage used to achieve specific results due to injury or moderate to severe pain. Several techniques make up NMT. The idea is to slowly return the muscle to it's original length & density by manipulating the origin and insertion of the muscle or other soft tissue. Used mainly in rehabilitative therapy with deep tissue, stretching, repetitive use therapy & to increase range of motion. Not generally offered as an individual massage and is incorporated with deep tissue or other massage modalities.

Stone or Hot Rock Massage - This type of massage uses the benefits of warmed flat stones to further promote relaxation. Generally, the therapist will place the stones in strategic places on large muscle groups and allow the heat of the stones to penetrate the soft tissues. Afterwards, the therapist will use the stones as a tool to gently massage. Used with aromatherapy, swedish & deep tissue.

Reflexology - One of my personal favorites! Reflexology uses the palm of the hands and the bottom of the feet as a map of the internal organs and bones in the body. In traditional Asian medicine, the hands and feet of an individual map their body and may hold the key to releasing tension, decreasing edema (swelling), and help with an array of other symptoms. May be included in any massage session or scheduled as an individual session.

Sports Kinesiology Massage - The type of massage is especially beneficial for athletes or anyone who works out on a regular basis and may be suffering from sore muscles or lack of flexibility of range of motion. A sports massage is generally a faster paced, more invigorating massage. The therapist will quickly warm up the muscles and soft tissues to achieve faster results. If the sports massage is done just before or after an intensive sporting event, the therapist will refrain from doing deep work and instead focus on soothing the muscles and slowly stretching the soft tissues.

Prenatal Massage - Massage is for the mother-to-be! Massage is generally contraindicated in the first trimester unless explicitly requested by her attending physician. Certain precautions are taken with pregnant women to insure the safety of the baby & the comfort of the mother. The therapist will generally lay the client on her left side to perform the massage -- the nutrition tube for the baby and the bladder are both on the right side of a woman's body, so she is sidelined to prevent discomfort & continue to nurture the baby. It is also not advisable to deeply massage the area of the collarbone or the ankles of a pregnant woman in the first two trimesters to prevent induced labor.