

Massage Notes

Winter 2010

Member, Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals

Your Massage Session

Dialing in the Details for a Great Experience

Karrie Osborn

These basic bodywork etiquette guidelines will help you get the most out of your massage, create a healthy client-therapist relationship, and address some of those unknowns.

It's All About Timing

Be good to yourself, and show up a few minutes early for your session. This allows you to transition into calm, healing space and focus on the massage. It also ensures you'll receive your full time allotment for the massage.

When scheduling at a spa, most guests are asked to arrive early to prepare for their session, stow belongings, and even enjoy the facility's amenities, such as a

be late, and understand that your session must end on time, regardless of when you arrived.

When it comes to cancellations, most spas and private practitioners require a 24-hour notice to avoid fees. Every situation is different, so check with your therapist about his or her specific cancellation policy, and then honor it.

Honor Your Body

Some people have a hard time even considering massage because they are so unhappy with their body. Primarily a female issue, poor body image can be extremely damaging. While it's hard to imagine that taking your clothes off and

Live in such a way that you would not be ashamed to sell your parrot to the town gossip.

-Will Rogers

Office Hours and Contact

Sports & Relaxation Massage Therapy
www.sportsandrelaxation.com
Janice King, LMT
651-343-1009

In this Issue

Your Massage Session
Why Buy Organic?
Probiotics for Skin Health



In addition to numerous health benefits, massage can boost body image and confidence.

steam room, before the scheduled service begins. New massage clients will also need to fill out health history intake forms.

If you do get held up in traffic and arrive late to your appointment, the therapist will probably not be able to give you a full session. Respect your therapist's time, call if you're going to

lying on a massage table will make the situation any better, massage therapy can do wonders to bring an individual back into body awareness. Bodywork can help mend the body-mind chasm that is created through self-hate, bringing the two pieces back together in a peaceful, healthy union.

Continued on page 2

Continued from page 1

Massage therapists and bodyworkers not only have advanced knowledge of tissues and structure, they also have a great appreciation for the human body as a whole, no matter its shape or size.

Communicate

One thing that will make your massage both more enjoyable and more beneficial is communicating with your therapist. If the room is too warm, if the bolster under your legs isn't in the right spot, if the music is driving you batty--whatever the issue--let your therapist know right away so you can get back to the business of enjoying your massage.

Skip Alcohol for Water

In resort settings, it can be hard to step away from icy margaritas on the beach to make that afternoon spa appointment. But the last thing you want is to be "tipsy" on the massage table. There are several downsides to being under the influence during a massage, the most important being how alcohol wreaks havoc with the body and can have a negative interaction when combined with bodywork. The result can be dizziness and nausea. That's no fun and a waste of good massage time and money. Leave the alcohol for another time. Water, before and after a therapeutic massage, is what the body really wants.

Won't Find That Here

It's unfortunate that massage therapists even have to address this subject, but they do. So the answer to late-night callers is, "No, we don't give happy endings. No, you may not pleasure yourself. Therapeutic massage has nothing to do with sex." If a misinformed client somehow ends up in the massage room of a professional therapist and asks for something other than therapeutic massage, they will be asked to leave. Flirting, inappropriate touching, and sexual innuendos will not be tolerated. Keep the relationship professional and above board and your therapist will be a valuable member of your healthcare team.

You're Human

The body can have a lot of responses to therapeutic massage. While avoiding food at least one hour before your

massage will help, there's still the chance that you'll have tummy gurgles or even pass gas. It's okay. As the body relaxes and systems get moving, the body can play all kinds of tricks. Your therapist has seen it all, yet sees well beyond those kinds of issues.

For men, there's even a possibility that massage will cause an erection--a normal response to nervous system activation. It rarely occurs, but if it does, your therapist will likely shift the focus of the work.

Time To Wake Up

While a nap after your massage may sound lovely, other massage clients will be arriving soon and the room must be readied for them. When your massage concludes, your therapist will say something along the lines of, "Our session is over. Take your time getting up." That's your cue to take a moment as

you come back to the here and now. Carefully sit up, allowing your body enough time to readjust. Go slow or else your body will knock you for a dizzying loop. Also, be careful not to slip getting off the massage table, especially if your therapist used oil on your feet.

Insights on Tipping

While it's customary to tip 15-20 percent, most experts say it's ultimately the client's decision. Like in other service industries, providing a tip is usually done in response to excellent service. A couple of notes: Many therapists who work in spas earn only a small percentage of what you've paid for their services. For these therapists, tips are an important part of their income. On the other hand, tips are usually not accepted for massage performed in a medical environment. Unsure what to do? Ask if tipping is customary and what is the policy.



Be good to yourself and show up a few minutes early for your massage appointment.

Why Buy Organic?

Is the Higher Price Worth It?

While shopping in your grocery store's produce section, you may notice the organically grown apples are pocked and not as big and perfectly round as the conventional produce, but they are more expensive. What's the difference, and which do you choose? Your decision may significantly impact not only your health but the health of the planet and the economy.

DEFINING "ORGANIC"

Organic foods are derived from sustainable farming practices that maintain and replenish soil fertility without the use of toxic pesticides and fertilizers. These foods are minimally processed and do not include artificial ingredients or preservatives. On the other hand, conventional farms often rely heavily on pesticides, genetic modification, synthetic hormones, and antibiotics.

DOES IT REALLY MATTER?

To understand the fallout of conventional farming is to realize the argument for organics. Bob Scowcroft,

executive director of the Organic Farming Research Foundation, touches on the devastating consequences of pesticides. "DDT nearly eliminated the American eagle by affecting their ability to reproduce" he says. "Since World War II, we've introduced more than 9,000 chemicals into the environment. And we don't know the full impact on humans and different sized humans," he adds, alluding to studies revealing damaging effects on children.

When you buy organically certified foods, you're ensured they are free of pesticides, hormones, antibiotics, and genetic DNA modification.

"Organics are better for the environment, and it's an investment in the revitalization of rural America," Scowcroft says. Organic farms are usually smaller, family-owned farms contributing to the economy of struggling rural America, he explains. The organic choice may be a little more expensive, but it's an investment in your health and the future.



Organic foods are free of pesticide residue.

Probiotics for Skin Health

Trust Your Gut on This One!

Shelley Burns, N.D.

Digestive health plays an important role in how skin appears on the surface. When digestion is not working optimally, it allows toxins to be reabsorbed in the body instead of being eliminated. The body then mounts a state of emergency as it's overwhelmed by toxins, some of them bad bacteria. These manifest directly on the surface for all the world to see, in the form of wrinkles, blotchiness, skin rashes, and acne.

This is where probiotics come into play. Probiotics contain potentially beneficial bacteria found in the digestive tract--what some call good gut bacteria. They help strengthen the digestive system but they also play an important role in skin health. Probiotics consist of

Lactobacillus acidophilus, *Lactobacillus bulgaricus*, and *Bifidobacterium bifidum*. They have anti-inflammatory, anti-pathogenic, and antiallergenic properties and can be used prophylactically and therapeutically.

There have been many studies showing benefits of probiotics to skin health. For example, there's a correlation between an imbalance of good and bad bacteria and the onset of acne. When bringing natural bacteria back into balance with a probiotic intervention, acne improves, in some studies, as much as 50 percent of the time.

There is no recommended daily intake for probiotics, but good food sources include buttermilk, kefir, miso,

tempeh, yogurt, and other fermented foods. Supplements are generally higher in potency and are used for therapeutic purposes in treating irritable bowel syndrome, Crohn's disease, colitis, and many other conditions.

While probiotics are essential for healthy skin and digestive health, there are many other appealing benefits to encourage their use, such as strengthening the immune system, replacing good bacteria after a course of antibiotics, and contributing to general health and well-being.

One note: Some probiotic supplements come from dairy sources and may not be suitable for individuals with dairy allergies or sensitivities.

*Whatever words
we utter should
be chosen with
care, for people
will hear them
and be
influenced by
them, for good
or ill.*

-Buddha

Sports & Relaxation Massage Therapy

651-343-1009

,



Member, Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals