



ABOUT YOUR MESSAGE

LIST OF HANDOUTS

What to Expect from Your Massage

Client Feedback Form

Pain, Activity, and Treatment Log

Why to Cancel When You're Ill

Between Massage Sessions

In the Hours After Your Massage



WHAT TO EXPECT FROM YOUR MESSAGE

Massage is more than a technique. To get what you truly need from the experience, you deserve to be treated well, listened to, and respected. No matter what massage therapist you see, you have a right to expect the therapist to:

1. Do his or her best to make you comfortable on the massage table.
2. Adjust the room temperature and table coverings so you are not too warm or cold.
3. Ask you about the comfort of the pressure and technique she or he uses during a session.
4. Give you privacy to dress and undress, and keep covered the areas of your body that are not receiving massage.
5. Respect your needs and wishes, and adopt an individualized approach to your session.

Massage works best as a partnership between massage therapist and client. To receive the best, most individualized treatment, remember to:

1. Tell your therapist if the pressure or other sensations are uncomfortable.
2. Update information about your medical conditions with your therapist.
3. Call 24 hours in advance to cancel.
4. Cancel if you are ill.
5. Let your physician know you are receiving massage.
6. Ask questions for more information or share concerns as they arise.
7. Change your position or communicate that you are uncomfortable if you need.



CLIENT FEEDBACK FORM

I want you to know that I appreciate your business and thank you for the trust you demonstrate when you come to me for massage. Massage therapy is a partnership. I believe you know what you need to relax and heal. And I rely on you to communicate your responses so that I can give a massage that best meets your specific needs.

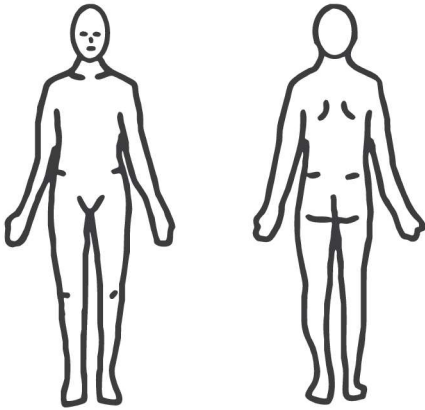
In the spirit of designing your personalized massage session, I would appreciate your taking the time to complete this survey.

1. Do you usually find the pressure during your massage comfortable? Too deep? Too light?
2. Is the temperature comfortable? Too warm? Too cool?
3. Are you usually comfortable on the table? If not, please describe what is uncomfortable for you.
4. Do you prefer scented or unscented oil or lotion?
5. Do you like the music? Or would you prefer different music, different volume, or no music at all?
6. How do you feel massage has helped you?
7. Is there anything else I can do to meet your specific needs with massage?

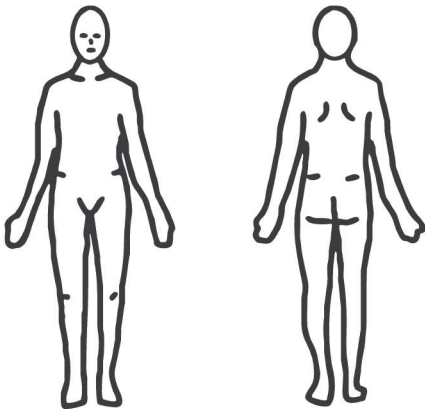


PAIN, ACTIVITY, AND TREATMENT LOG

Where do you feel pain now?



Where have you felt pain since the last massage?



The purpose of tracking pain and other symptoms is to better understand the pattern of your symptoms and the results of your activities, such as pain and stress. Things you can track that you may find helpful are: treatment sessions and effects, pain levels, mood changes, what causes you stress, and what helps you feel better.

This will get you started tracking your symptoms. Complete it once a week for 3 or 4 weeks. Then compare and share the results with your massage therapist and any other practitioners who you are seeing for pain reduction.

1. Show on the drawings to the left where you feel pain now and/or have felt pain since your last massage.
2. Do you often feel pain in this area?
3. On a pain scale of 1 to 10, how do you rate your pain? (One is no pain, ten is extreme pain.)
4. How do you describe your pain (dull, nagging, driving, pins and needles, stabbing, etc.)?
5. What activities bring on pain?
6. What have you noticed reduces your pain?
7. What other kinds of stress or discomfort are you feeling?
8. What have you noticed makes your symptoms worse?
9. What have you noticed makes your symptoms better?
10. Was your pain and stress significantly better after your last massage session?
11. What has your activity level been since the last massage?
12. How do you feel after exercising?
13. How do you feel after working?
14. What other types of treatment have you had for your pain/stress since your last massage? Did they help?



WHY TO CANCEL WHEN YOU'RE ILL

If you have a fever or an infectious sickness, even a common cold, that is good reason to postpone your massage appointment. For one thing, touch may not feel good. For another thing, you may be contagious, especially in the first stages of a cold or flu. This is usually when you are feeling the worst, when you are coughing and sneezing frequently.

The more you limit your contact with others, including your massage therapist, the less you will spread it around. For example, if you don't "pass" a cold on to your massage therapist, he or she won't spread it to all the other clients.

Studies show that you can transmit a cold or flu to others one or two days before your symptoms appear, and up to five days after first being exposed to the virus. According to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), colds are most contagious two to four days after original exposure, when there is plenty of the virus present in nasal secretions.

There is another reason to avoid massage when you have a cold or flu. When you are sick, your immune system is already working hard. Because massage affects circulation, that additional stress on your system may actually make things worse. One of the best immune supports may truly be resting and drinking plenty of liquids.

And, remember, whenever you have any questions about the appropriateness of massage, be sure to talk with a massage therapist when you schedule the appointment. And, if you are under the care of a physician for any reason, let him or her know you are receiving massage therapy.



BETWEEN MASSAGE SESSIONS

Practice these self-care tips regularly, to get the most out of your massage.

- 1. Stretch.** If you are getting massage for pain and discomfort, stretching is essential for you. Frequency is more important than length of a stretching session.
 - Try setting up a reminder sound like a chime on your computer, your phone, or your watch to remind you to stretch for 2 minutes every hour, or 5 minutes every two hours.
 - Follow this simple routine: Exhale as you stretch whatever feels tight or uncomfortable to a feel-good position, and inhale as you return to a starting position. (Ask about stretches for specific areas.)
- 2. Exercise regularly.** Even very moderate exercise can help relieve pent-up muscle tension and improve your circulation. Walking, gardening, golfing, and tai chi are all ways to get your heart pumping and your muscles moving. These and other moderate activities can also help shift your attention from your worries to relaxation and the enjoyment of life.
- 3. Take time to relax.** What do you enjoy most? Instead of waiting for time to open up in your busy schedule, prioritize those things in the evenings and on the weekends. Change your schedule to include more down time, even if it's only 15 minutes for deep breathing or a walk after work or at lunch. On the weekend, get away from chores for a morning or afternoon to enjoy some time in nature or a pot of tea with friends.



IN THE HOURS AFTER YOUR MASSAGE

After your massage you may notice profound changes in your body and mind. Here are some things that have helped many people get the most from their massage.

1. Schedule time to take it easy after your massage. Rest if you feel the need. If you can, take a nap or get in bed early. If you haven't been sleeping well, receiving massage may relax you enough that you will want to turn in and catch up.
2. If the focus of your massage is on a particular injury or body part, remember to stretch, ice, or apply heat to that area with the advice of your massage therapist. Or, you may want to do some gentle movement, such as walking, sometime in the hours after your massage to mildly encourage your muscles to work in a balanced and efficient way.
3. People sometimes experience soreness for 24 hours or so after a massage. If you do feel sore or think that you might, stretch gently in a hot shower or take a warm bath with Epsom salts. And remember to tell your massage therapist about your experience so it can be taken into consideration in your next session.