

The Massage Monthly

December 2024 Member, Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals

Six Massage Questions You're Afraid to Ask

Get the Inside Scoop

Robert Chute

Considering massage but have a few concerns? Get your answers here!

I'M A BIT UNCOMFORTABLE TAKING ALL MY CLOTHES OFF WHEN I GO FOR MASSAGE. DO I HAVE TO BE COMPLETELY NAKED TO RECEIVE MASSAGE?

Some people go under the sheets without a stitch on, others wear underwear, and some people prefer to wear shorts, sweatpants, or even their regular street clothes. No, you don't have to take off more clothes than you are comfortable with to receive massage. Talk to your therapist and he or she will adapt to your needs. Be aware that wearing more clothes can interfere with the use of certain techniques, but there's no reason you can't enjoy receiving

For some, it creates a psychological boundary that allows them to more fully relax during the massage, and that's okay, too. Rest assured, massage therapists work with all kinds of bodies, from the very young to the very old and all shapes and sizes in between. Massage therapists are a very caring and giving group. To be successful at what they do, they have to be. Your therapist strives to strike a balance between engaging with you as the complex individual you are, as well as seeing your body and all its unique qualities from a clinical perspective. Bodywork is about the careful application of techniques to muscles, ligaments, and connective tissue as a means to enhance your whole being; it's not about judgment.



Make sure all of your questions are answered so you can fully relax and enjoy your massage.

massage in casual clothes. Therapists won't be able to use lotion and may be unable to work as deeply, but they can adapt to your comfort level and still deliver a satisfying massage experience.

People who are self-conscious about their bodies might get massage more often, and with less apprehension, if they had the added underwear barrier.

I'D LIKE GET MESSAGES MORE OFTEN, BUT I CAN'T AFFORD IT. DO I TALK TO MY MASSAGE THERAPIST ABOUT THIS?

Yes, talk to your massage therapist. Your practitioner may have a client loyalty or frequent-buyer program in place to bring down the total cost of massage, or a time-pay option to spread out the cost.

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You are as unlimited as the endless universe.

-Shad Helmstetter

Office Hours and Contact

218-263-1501

www.ohanatherapeutic.com

E/O Mon: 11am-6pm

Tues: 9am-1:30pm

Wed. & Thurs: 11am - 6pm

E/O Fri: 9am-1:30pm

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Many therapists take credit cards, and some will take postdated checks or a series of postdated checks to work out a payment plan. Some therapists have a sliding scale of fees depending on annual income and financial hardship, or they may accept coupons from bartering networks.

If you have some flexibility with your schedule, ask your therapist if she/he does a standby list. Your therapist might consider a discount fee if you can pop in for a last-minute appointment and fill a late cancellation.

You may also want to check with your employer or insurance carrier to see if you might be covered for massage therapy.

If you love massage and communicate to your therapist how much you value it, you might be able to work out an arrangement that's fair to all parties.

I'M NEVER SURE ABOUT GRATUITIES FOR MASSAGE SERVICES. WHAT SHOULD I TIP?

Massage therapists working in spas don't usually receive the full fee charged for their services. They work on a percentage split with the spa owner or receive a salary. If you are visiting a spa, tipping is common (15-20 percent) and therapists may depend on tips for their income, just as restaurant servers do.

Your solo practitioner will likely appreciate tips as well, although not all massage settings accept tips (a doctor's office with a practitioner who offers massage, for example). Bottom line is, if you feel like tipping, offer. If you don't feel tipping is appropriate, don't.

WHAT SHOULD I DO WHEN I FEEL TICKLISH ON THE MASSAGE TABLE?

Some people are sensitive to particular techniques, which make them feel uncomfortable and want to giggle. If that happens, your therapist may use a broader stroke or deeper pressure so it doesn't tickle. In the unlikely event you're still way too ticklish with those variations, the therapist can skip that part of the body and concentrate on less sensitive areas. It's your massage, so you can dictate what works and what doesn't. Be sure to tell your therapist beforehand about any sensitive or particularly ticklish areas of your body so he or she can accommodate you more effectively.

ISN'T IT TRUE THAT MASSAGE HAS TO HURT TO DO ANY GOOD?

Massage does not have to hurt to help. You can gain therapeutic benefits from a relaxing massage, which doesn't hurt a bit, or you can seek out more aggressive treatment options, which can cause some discomfort. Trigger point therapy and friction are examples of techniques, which are briefly uncomfortable, but very helpful for many conditions. If you don't want heavy pressure, say so. Massage therapists want to help you. If you're wincing under the pressure and tightening up, that will work against the goals of massage, which is to invite your body to relax, reduce pain, increase well-being, and have long, supple muscles. Massage therapists aren't in the torture business. Let your therapist know what feels good and what doesn't. Recognize that your needs and pain threshold might change with each visit.

FROM THE MALE CLIENT: WHAT IF I GET AN ERECTION DURING A MASSAGE?

It rarely occurs, but if it does, don't panic. Sometimes as a result of your nervous system going into relaxation mode (or because of certain medications) erections happen. Therapists know that this is a physiological reaction and will treat the situation accordingly. Usually your therapist will try to redirect your attention with a shift in the focus of his or her work, maybe by altering pressure or moving to a different area of your body. Your unintended erection, and any embarrassment, will soon pass.

Any more unspoken questions for your therapist? Ask. Your honesty will strengthen your therapeutic bond with your caregiver and let you deepen your relaxation time and feeling of healing. And that's what it's all about: You.



A deeply relaxing experience, massage contributes to your overall health and wellness.

Put Your Best Face Forward

Tess Mauricio

You might be surprised at what can speed up your skin's aging process. Following are several ways to ensure you continue to put your best face forward.

AVOID DRINKING THROUGH STRAWS

I'm sure many of you drink dark sodas, tea, and coffee through a straw to prevent staining your pearly whites or avoid putting your mouth on a can or bottle, right? Unfortunately, it's causing fine lines around your mouth, a sign of premature aging.

TRAIN YOURSELF TO SLEEP ON YOUR BACK

Resting your face on the pillow in the same way every night for years leads to wrinkles, which eventually become etched on the surface of the skin and no longer disappear the next morning.

PULL DOWN THE SHADE IN AN AIRPLANE

You're much closer to the sun in a plane than on land, and ultraviolet (UV) rays, which can penetrate windows, are more intense at higher altitudes. Pilots and flight attendants have been found to be

at an increased risk for melanoma and other skin cancers.

BEWARE BEAUTY CREAMS WITH TOXIC INGREDIENTS

Exposure to some beauty cream chemicals does more harm than good. Know your ingredients and consult with your skin care professional to make the best possible product selections. Some experts caution against the use of creams that contain dimethicone, mineral oil, parabens, paraffin, and petrolatum.

CLEAN GLASSES AND SUNGLASSES

Bacteria on the eyeglass frame will sit directly on your face for an extended period of time. Simply wipe clean with an antibacterial cloth each day.

WASH AWAY CHLORINE

After a dip in the pool or hot tub, wash your face with a cleanser to remove all chemical residues, and be sure to moisturize afterward.

Tess Mauricio, MD, is the founder and

owner/operator of multiple cosmetic dermatology centers throughout Southern California. She is currently a fellow of the American Board of Dermatology, and diplomate of the American Academy of Dermatology. Learn more online at www.scrippsderm.com.



Wash your face to remove residue.

Foods to Boost Your Mood

Don't let your diet get you down. If you're looking for a quick pick-me-up that will boost your mood but go easy on your calorie count, consider these "superfoods" recommended by Mehmet Oz, MD, vice-chair and professor of surgery at Columbia University and contributor to Oprah.com.

KEFIR MILK

Try it if: you're looking to calm down. Made by fermenting more traditional milk with kefir grains, this drink is high in the amino acid tryptophan, which produces a relaxing effect on the nervous system. As a bonus, the drink also contains a healthy amount of B vitamins.

ASPARAGUS

Try it if: you're feeling low. This vegetable is loaded with folic acid,

which is good news for your mood, as low levels of the vitamin have been tied to depression. In fact, one 5.3-ounce serving contains 60 percent of your recommended daily folic acid allowance. Plus, asparagus is low in calories and contains no fat or cholesterol, so it won't ruin your diet.

ORANGES

Try it if: you're stressed out. Why? Vitamin C. This powerhouse nutrient can help support your immune system, skin, and more, but its stress-fighting powers come from its effect on your blood pressure. Studies have shown that consuming 500 milligrams of vitamin C daily can dramatically lower cardiovascular and stroke risk. One orange contains about 80 milligrams.

*Studies show
when people
strive to
deliberately
cultivate and
inspire
gratitude, the
benefits reach
inward and
extend outward.*

UPCOMING HOURS

E/O Monday (12/2, 12/16, 12/23, 12/30...): 11am - 6pm

Tuesdays: 9am - 1:30pm

Wednesdays: 11am - 6pm

Thursdays: 11am - 6pm

E/O Friday (12/13, 12/27, 1/10, etc.): 9am - 1:30pm

HOURS ADJUSTMENT:

Since Christmas is in the middle of the week, our hours that week will be slightly different than normal. We will be open Monday, 12/23 (a bonus Monday this month!) and closed Tuesday, 12/24 and Wednesday, 12/25 to celebrate the holiday with our loved ones. We will resume our normal E/O week schedule starting Thursday 12/26. We will also be closed on Wednesday, 1/1 to start our New Year in a rested state. We hope you can do the same.

-- Unknown

Empowering you to heal yourself

208 E Howard St
Hibbing, MN 55746



Member, **Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals**