



MAKING SENSE OF MASSAGE

The practice of massage therapy is an ancient healing art that dates back many thousands of years and is currently enjoying a modern day rediscovery. Used by Shamanic healers to cleanse the body of evil spirits, massage therapy was also used by many ancient civilisations, such as the Egyptians, Indians, Greeks and Romans. Historical records suggest that the Greeks and Romans enjoyed the luxury and therapeutic worth of massage therapy in conjunction with bathing. In more recent times, massage therapy is being enjoyed by many as a pleasurable experience to relieve the stresses of modern day living, and is holding its own in the face of increasing scientific investigation into its worth. Many people today seek massage therapy as a treatment for specific ailments such as back pain, while others enjoy this form of touch therapy as a soothing experience that helps make them more aware of their body, stimulates their senses and cares for their body, mind and soul.

Massage can be defined as the application of therapeutic manipulations of the soft tissues of the body, to bring about a positive change in the recipient. The two major types of massage treatments available widely today are relaxation massage (sometimes referred to as Swedish massage) and remedial massage.

Developed around two hundred years ago, the system of Swedish / relaxation massage had its origins in Sweden, and formed part of a health enhancement program that used massage alongside of exercise and stretching to promote health and wellness. A relaxation massage therapist would employ the five basic Swedish massage strokes when performing a treatment on a client to enhance their mood, relieve stress, aid relaxation, provide relief from tension and anxiety, or increase circulation to name just a few benefits.

The majority of massage practitioners adopt an approach to treatment that is holistic; one that seeks to address the whole person, taking into consideration the body, mind and soul. Outside of the realm of relaxation massage, in modern massage practices, these basic five Swedish strokes have been developed and advanced beyond the traditional methods. Remedial massage, for example, may encompass other techniques including, but not limited to, trigger point therapy, myofascial release techniques, and manual lymphatic drainage techniques. Treatment from a remedial therapist is common for people with musculoskeletal complaints such as low back pain or tendonitis, to minimise or as an aid in the recovery from injury, to improve their posture or assist in maintaining joint range of motion, or improve muscular function.



Massage therapy is non-addictive, readily available and pleasurable, and is generally considered a safe and effective form of therapy for a vast array of medical complaints.

For a relaxation massage, during your first consultation with a therapist, you will be asked for a detailed health history in order for your individual needs to be identified. Armed with this case history, the therapist is then able to select the most effective treatment strategy to suit you. For remedial massages, a more detailed case history may be sought and an objective musculoskeletal assessment may be undertaken.

Whether you want to enhance your wellbeing by receiving relaxation massages or if you wish to enjoy the muscular relief that a more therapeutic treatment such as remedial massage can provide, massage therapy is worth a try! Ask your local health club or personal trainer today about how they can assist you in enjoying the many benefits that massage therapy has to help improve your overall health.