

HANDS OFF OUR NAME

Massage Is Therapy

TOOLKIT

Overview

Massage is Therapy. In many states, massage therapy is a part of healthcare. Massage therapy can help with many things such as:

- Headaches
- Pain - Musculoskeletal and Joint Pain
- Muscle Strains/Sprains
- Recovery from surgeries like joint replacements and more
- Assist in recovery from cancer and cancer treatment
- Massage for infants helps with growth
- Helps Reduce Anxiety and depression
- Helps Reduce Symptoms Related to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Rehabilitation of Injuries
- Reduces pain and increases range of motion with Arthritis
- Helps with every stage of Pregnancy, Labor and Delivery, Post-Partum
- Aging aches, pains and loss of movement
- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome
- Plantar Fasciitis (Foot Pain)
- Improves sleep
- Reduces Fibromyalgia Pain and Symptoms
- Reduces Lymphedema

Massage therapists in most states have laws that require that they attend and pass an approved massage school program, pass a state licensing exam, pass a background check and fulfill certain requirements for renewing their license. There are also laws that make it so law-abiding massage therapists have to have their license number on any and all advertising, including their website and booking system. They may also be required to have their license hanging on the wall of the office and many have photo ID. Some that don't require photos on the license will require that the person carry ID at work. (Many illicit businesses were just having one license hanging on the wall and every person said it was their license and they did not carry any ID so it could not be proven that it was their license.) Most states have licensing verification systems that you can use to verify that the person is actually licensed which also means they have the appropriate training to deal with the many issues you have.

How to Find a Good Massage Therapist

Every person is unique in their needs for massage and their experience of massage. What feels great to one person, may not feel so great for others. Your first few massages will be a process of finding out what works best for you. Often first massage sessions are painful and that is because of the tightness in the muscles. You have to keep in contact with your massage therapist and when they ask about pressure and how it feels, be direct. The massage should not hurt. Massage therapists may seem like they are mind readers because they can find the exact spots that are causing the pain or problem, but they do not know how it actually feels to YOU.

Your massage therapist will start with an intake form and process that will ask you about your general health conditions. It is important that they know some crucial things like medications that could be influenced or create problems in your massage session, previous injuries and your current state of health.

Finding the right person for you is often a matter of trying different therapists and in the process learning about your body and becoming more aware of your muscles, joints and the way you move. There are so many different types of massage and every massage therapist takes each type of massage and makes it into their own version. The massage itself should address your pain and stress issues. The massage therapist will make you feel comfortable and more able to relax on the table.

Start with asking your friends, family or co-workers where they go. You can also ask your doctor for a referral/prescription as it may be covered by health insurance in your state. In most states, you can get massage covered by your car insurance when you are in a motor vehicle collision where you are injured in a way that massage therapy could help. Whiplash, back and neck pain, leg/hip/knee pain may be treated with massage therapy after being examined by a doctor to rule out serious injuries.

Client/Patient Bill of Rights

As a recipient of massage, you can expect to:

1. **Informed Consent.** You have the right to be informed about your health and your massage session. Your therapist will share their objectives, proposed treatment plan, expected outcomes and the time frame that it will take to achieve the results. Your therapist will need to know about your current medical conditions and medications to create an effective treatment plan. They will explain to you the recommended treatments and procedures that will take place. Massage therapists are able to make assessments on your condition but are

not able to provide a diagnosis. Your massage therapist will inform you of what body areas they will work on.

2. You have the right to tell your therapist what you want and do not want in your massage session. You have control if you do not want them to touch various areas of the body like the feet that may be ticklish or any other area that may make you feel uncomfortable for any reason. Tell them.

3. You will be able to undress to the level of YOUR comfort. The therapist will leave the room as you undress and get onto the massage table. Draping is required and must cover private areas. Requests for undraped massage are not accepted.

4. The amount of pressure applied in a massage session is directed by you. If you tell a massage therapist that it is too much pressure being applied and they do not respond accordingly, you have the right to end the session immediately.

5. You will be able to inform your therapist of things like the temperature in the room, the music and lighting in the room which can be adjusted to your comfort.

6. Sexual advances are not a part of massage therapy and are considered to be sexual harassments and will be reported to the authorities.

Massage Therapist Bill of Rights

Your Massage Therapist expects you to:

1. Show up a few minutes before your session to make sure you are on time and fill out paperwork.

2. Inform them of your health conditions.

3. Tell them honestly about the amount of pressure that they are using.

4. Respect draping requirements

5. Be respectful. Massage is Therapy. Massage therapists are healthcare providers

6. They have the right to not accept you as a client if you have health conditions that are contraindicated or out of their expertise.

Sexually Oriented Businesses Disguised as Massage Businesses.

When seeking a massage therapist to work with, it is important to understand that some of these places are brothels disguised as massage businesses. The media will often refer to these places as illicit massage businesses. They are all around in our communities. A very high percentage of these places are also hiding the crime of human trafficking. The problem is also that some of these places will also give what appears to be a massage and some are even good.

When searching for a massage therapist, it is important to know the signs that these places are not law-abiding massage therapists.

- Windows and doors covered
- Open early and open very late. (6 am to 11 pm or later.)
- Websites with photos of scantily clad women in provocative poses
- Cash only
- Very low cost sessions like \$25-\$40
- No massage license number on advertising, websites or licensing certificates hanging on the wall of offices (depends on the laws in your state. See below)
- Hide behind foot massage spas, Asian Massage, Thai Massage.

Asian Massage Places commonly hide illegal activities, but it is important to be able to tell them apart from law-abiding Asian Massage Therapists. There are true types of Asian Massage but they will use their specific type of massage as specified by The American Organization for Bodywork Therapies of Asia® website. <https://aobta.org/> which lists these various types of massage:

Acupressure, Jin Shin Do®Bodymind Acupressure®, Amma, Amma Therapy®, Chi Nei Tsang, Jin Shou Tuina™, Nuad Bo 'Rarn (Traditional Thai), Tuina, Medical Qigong, Five Element Shiatsu, Integrative Eclectic Shiatsu, Japanese Shiatsu, Macrobiotic Shiatsu, Shiatsu Anma Therapy, Zen Shiatsu, Shiatsu From the American Organization for Bodywork Therapies of Asia.

Is it trafficking?

We really can't tell if a business is involved in human trafficking without proper investigations. Businesses that look suspicious should be reported to your local law enforcement agency.

Hands Off Our Name

The words Massage and Massage Therapy are constantly being used as a cover for these illegal activities. The Media and others will inaccurately refer to these places as Illicit Massage Businesses or Massage Parlors. They are NOT Massage anything. They are Sexually Oriented Businesses Disguised as Massage Businesses (SOBs).

Correcting the use of language and calling them what they are will go a long way in bringing awareness to your community and help everyone to realize that this is a societal issue. The many men who frequent these places make it a very lucrative business for the people who own them.

Verify Massage Licenses



[Look Before You Book a Massage](#) - Verify your massage therapists license.