

The Massage Monthly

May 2017

Member, Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals

Pregnancy Massage

Touch for the Mom-To-Be

Pregnancy is nine transformative months full of excitement, planning, and peering at the awesome unfolding of life. But this transformation also brings inevitable side effects.

But you don't have to suffer in silence. The gentle, noninvasive approach of pregnancy massage can ease your discomfort, help you prepare for labor, give you the emotional support of a caring practitioner, and bring back a sense of body-mind integration, putting you into a state of relaxation and calm acceptance of your continually evolving physical form.

According to Lynne Daize, with the National Association of Pregnancy

and concentrates on those areas most vulnerable to changes in your body. She might also give you deep breathing exercises and tips on how to improve your posture to adjust to the added weight and shifting center of gravity.

As pregnancy progresses, your body adjusts to a changing postural alignment caused by the baby's increasing weight. This puts strain on your back and legs and increases stress on weight-bearing joints. Massage increases flexibility, enhancing the ability to carry this extra weight while also relieving aches and pains, leg cramps, and muscle spasms. The effects of relaxation and tension release add to improvement in the physical state of muscles and joints, and

*We're all
fabulous in our
own way.*

-Maria Jones



Ease discomfort, help prepare for labor, and give emotional support.

Massage Therapy, training for this specialty includes learning specific techniques for each trimester, as well as those required for labor and postpartum massage. A certified pregnancy massage therapist is well-acquainted with the physical and hormonal effects of pregnancy and has the skills to counterbalance these changes. You'll find the therapist uses a lighter touch

assist in balancing emotions.

Studies from the Touch Research Institute (TRI) in Miami, Florida, indicate that pregnancy massage provides more than just symptom relief for the mother. A group of 26 pregnant women were given either massage or relaxation

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Office Hours and Contact

Ohana Therapeutic Massage

218-263-1501

Spring Hours

Mon. thru Thurs. 9am-6pm

Friday 9am-2pm

Sat 5/6 and 5/20 9am-12pm

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therapy during a five-week study. In addition to experiencing a reduction in symptoms of anxiety, stress, sleep problems, and back pain, the massage group had fewer complications in their delivery. Their newborns also had fewer postnatal complications. Another TRI study reported massage during labor resulted in shorter labor times for the mothers, shorter hospital stays, and less postpartum depression.

Obstetrician Bonita Kolrud of Westside Women's Care in Wheat Ridge, Colorado, is an avid proponent of bodywork, although she cautions women to make sure their therapist is experienced with pregnancy massage. Kolrud praises the physical benefits of massage, noting it relieves tension and pain caused by changes in body alignment. "The biggest thing is so many women still look at massage as a luxury. But it has so many physical health benefits and is more of a necessity for some patients. Emotionally, it's really beneficial for women to be touched when they're pregnant. I think a lot of pregnant women don't necessarily get as much physical touching as they would like. It's a very nurturing thing having someone taking care of you, and it's a great bonding experience with the baby when you're both receiving massage."

What to Expect When Expecting

During the first trimester of pregnancy, a primary goal of massage is to provide relaxation and increase flow of the circulation systems. Stimulating the blood system pumps more energy-giving oxygen and nutrients into your cells and increases blood flow to the placenta. Muscle tension can slow down lymph flow, leaving you fatigued. By stimulating this system, massage can boost your immunity and energy level.

In the second trimester, increasing weight of the baby can cause muscle soreness. "The mother starts going through more changes," Daize says, "so massage is used to relieve muscle spasms and ease structural changes." The therapist works to loosen joints, keeping them aligned, and soften the connective tissues, thereby relieving backaches and leg cramps.

As pregnancy progresses and the

abdomen enlarges, special positioning is required during massage. Up to the 24th week of pregnancy it is acceptable, according to Daize, for moms to be on their back with the right hip tilted up, taking pressure off the nerves and arteries. Pressure on the arteries in the back, she notes, will diminish blood flow and oxygen to the fetus. Another position that decreases stress on the back is side-lying, with the belly supported by a small wedge pillow.

During the final trimester's "home stretch," the baby begins to gain weight more rapidly, pressing against inner organs and shifting them about. Discomfort increases and the impending due date can cause added stress and anxiety. At this stage, Daize says, the therapist focuses on trigger points to relieve pain while continuing to elicit relaxation throughout the body. Generally, during the last two weeks

before the mother's due date, the therapist concentrates her techniques on preparing the woman's body for delivery.

Before initiating massage, consult your obstetrician, especially if you are at high risk. While massage is a safe treatment, there are certain conditions that require your physician's approval and careful monitoring by the therapist. Notify your therapist immediately of any changes in your physical health, and consult your obstetrician about continuing the treatments should complications arise. Some physicians may be unaware of the benefits of pregnancy massage and hesitant to recommend it. In these cases, the therapist can help by providing information that explains her specialized training and experience.



A great way to nurture soon-to-be moms.

Cultivating a Gardening Habit

Discover the Health Benefits of Yard Work

Feeling the need to exercise, clean up your diet, meditate? Want to be more creative, get out and meet people, enjoy the outdoors, and slow down? There's one activity in which you can accomplish all of these objectives: gardening.

ENCOURAGING EXERCISE

Studies show that vigorous digging burns 500 calories an hour, weeding burns 210 calories, and mowing the lawn burns 400 calories. As a moderate exercise, gardening has been found to decrease the risk of heart disease and diabetes, and a study at the University of Arkansas found that gardening was almost as effective as weight lifting in reducing the risk for osteoporosis in women. So instead of taking that indoor aerobics class this summer, try mowing the lawn or planting an herb garden.

As with any exercise regimen, the key is to start at a comfortable pace and gradually work your way up to longer, more difficult activities. Your heart rate should be about the same as when you

take a brisk walk.

IMPROVING YOUR DIET

Gardening will also likely help you eat better. Research shows that people who grow gardens eat more vegetables and fruits than those who don't. Growing fresh herbs, even in a container on the deck or balcony, is another great way to add flavor and freshness to home-cooked meals and an incentive to try new recipes.

BOOSTING YOUR SOCIAL LIFE

Gardening can also be quite social. Whether at a garden club, a community garden, or an online forum, people love to share ideas, solve common problems, and connect through mutual interests.

EASING STRESS

And finally, gardening is a great way to manage stress. Spending time outside and tuning in to the rhythms of nature, we're reminded to be patient, slow down, and breathe the fresh air. Whether growing flowers, vegetables, or

herbs, a garden reminds us of our connection to life and the abundance that nature so freely gives.



Gardening burns calories and improves diet.

MT Straight Talk

What Your Massage Therapist Needs to Know

Angela England

Most massage therapists guide first-time clients through an intake process that includes discussing health histories and other medical concerns. But talking with your therapist about these things should not end with your first massage. Before each session, take a minute to speak with your therapist about any new medical conditions or injuries, lasting aches and pains, or any other changes in your life. Here are some of the issues your massage therapist should know about.

Medical Changes

It's a good idea to regularly update your medical record with your therapist, especially if you've been diagnosed with an illness or medical condition--such as high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, a chronic autoimmune disease, or skin allergies--or are taking any new medications. Certain medical concerns

preclude you from receiving massage. Other conditions, such as pregnancy, simply change the way your practitioner approaches the session.

A New or Acute Injury

Maybe you spent hours driving to a destination getaway and your shoulders ache, or you stepped off the porch wrong and sprained your ankle. Any time you have a new ache, pain, sprain, twist, or pulled muscle, mention it to your therapist. Depending on the location and extent of your injury, the session may need to be postponed or the injury site avoided until more healing has occurred.

Personal Preferences

This category is less obvious, but equally important. Everyone has unique

preferences and sometimes there may be something you would like to change for your next massage. Whether you want to bring your own music, have the temperature adjusted, or be draped in an extra blanket, your therapist can easily adapt as long as you communicate your preferences.

Help your practitioner help you. Take a moment to check in with him or her before your next session.

Angela England enjoys doing massage, gardening, writing, and spending time with her three young children.

*Never be the
cause of
somebody else's
bad day.*

-Jennifer Weinberg

WeGiveBack May Honorees!

May brings the end of the school year. While kids are excited about this time, it can be very stressful for teachers and their support staff. That's why we choose to honor TEACHERS AND THEIR SUPPORT STAFF with 25 - FREE 30 minute massage appointments. From May 8th - 20th, Teachers and their support staff can receive a FREE 30 minute massage. For more details or to schedule your free 30 minute massage, please call us at 218-263-1501.

Upcoming events:

Mother's Day Gift Certificate Special - receive a free gift with purchase of a gift certificate valued at \$50 or more.

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