

Use of Essential Oils

The massage therapist may use essential oils during your massage. Since many have physical effects on the body, you should be aware of the oils the therapist may use. Oils which have stimulating effects should be avoided, such as basil, cinnamon, cedarwood and peppermint. Clary sage should also be avoided as it can initiate labor. The following are recommended as safe for use during pregnancy: lavender to relieve nausea, headaches and constipation; neroli and ylang-ylang may help reduce stretch marks.

Doctor's Approval

It is very important you obtain approval from your obstetrician before receiving any form of massage during pregnancy.



The material in this brochure is adapted from Maternity Massage by Connie Cox (May 1994), published by Stress Less Publishing, Inc., 7000 E. Camelback Road, Scottsdale, AZ 85251. The book may be ordered direct from the publisher for \$12.95 plus \$2.75 postage and handling. You may also order by phone: 800/794-7066.

COMPLIMENTS OF:



About
Maternity
Massage



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Why Massage During Pregnancy?

Massage during pregnancy not only makes a woman feel pampered, but offers undeniable physical benefits as well. Massage can relieve fatigue, enhance sleep and calm an active baby.

FIRST TRIMESTER

- *Relieve headaches*
- *Help alleviate morning sickness*
- *Reduce fatigue*

SECOND TRIMESTER

- *Alleviate backaches*
- *Relieve leg cramps*

THIRD TRIMESTER

- *Reduce swelling/edema*
- *Relieve pain from varicosities*
- *Enhance sleep*
- *Prepare pelvic muscles for birth process*

During the entire term of the pregnancy, massage can stimulate blood flow, which may assist in the prevention of anemia. An increase in muscle tone and flexibility will occur, alleviating leg cramps and muscle spasms.

Massage during pregnancy is also a great way to relieve everyday tension and the general aches and pains your body is suffering. It stimulates your lymphatic system, increasing immunity and the removal of excess toxins, while also stabilizing hormonal levels and balancing the glandular system.

How Will I Receive My Massage?

When receiving pregnancy massage, you are positioned on your side to give the therapist access to your back, or in a semi-reclining position for massage on the front of your body. Your body will be supported with pillows or special cushions. Some therapists may have pillows specifically designed for pregnant women, including a "breakaway tummy" to support the pelvic area while lying on your stomach. You will be properly draped while the therapist is working, except for the area being massaged.

What Techniques Will Be Used?

Many pregnancy massage specialists integrate a variety of techniques into their work. Depending upon where you are in the pregnancy, the therapist may utilize reflexology, Swedish massage, or very light shiatsu.



Are There Times When Massage During Pregnancy Should Be Avoided?

Women with normal, low-risk pregnancies can benefit greatly from massage by a trained pregnancy massage therapist. However, women in high-risk pregnancies should consult with their doctor or midwife before beginning a massage therapy program. If at any time during the massage you experience discomfort, tell the therapist immediately.

What About Massage After Delivery of My Baby?

Massage during the weeks after delivery helps to restore muscle tone in the abdomen and reposition the pelvis.

And remember, touch is a very important part of bonding with your baby. Ask about receiving instruction in massaging your baby.