

# Massage at True Health

## What is Massage?

Massage is probably the oldest healing discipline known to man. It involves using pressure, friction, vibration or stretching to relieve stress and tension in muscles, joints, ligaments, tendons, skin and connective tissue. The therapist may use their hands, elbows, forearms or a specific device to perform these techniques. There are over eighty different known forms of massage.

## What massage styles do you offer here?

At True Health we offer several different forms of massage including:

- **Remedial** – involves deep pressure and kneading techniques to rehabilitate muscle, ligament and joint injuries. Also known as sports massage.
- **Relaxation** – involves lighter, soothing long strokes or rocking techniques that relax and de-stress.
- **Oriental / Acupressure** – uses the theory of Chinese Medicine to unblock energy pathways in the body by applying pressure to specific acupoints. The focus of this massage style is to restore the harmonious flow of qi (“chee”), thereby restoring function and removing pain.
- **Pregnancy** – focuses on pre-natal health and preparation for labour by relaxing ligaments in the lower back and pelvis. We have a special pregnancy cushion that fits our treatment tables, enabling you to lie facedown right up until the fortieth week.
- **Bowen therapy** – comprises gentle rolling techniques across muscle and ligaments that helps to “reset” muscles, relieving tension and stress in affected areas. It is considered an energetic medicine and usually no further treatment will be done for the remainder of the day after a Bowen session.
- **Hot stone therapy** – uses smooth heated basalt stones placed on problem areas, or held in the hands or placed between toes. The gentle, soothing warmth of the stones is very relaxing and calming. It aids circulation and calms the nervous system.
- **Lomi-lomi** – originating in Hawaii, this is a very relaxing, almost meditative form of massage where long flowing strokes are used to harmonise and clear energy blocks in the body.



## What should I expect on my first visit?

Our massage therapist will take a detailed history & thoroughly assess your condition. As with most massage assessments, the practitioner will also conduct Range-of-Motion tests to check which muscles are restricted in their action.

Once the problem spots are identified, techniques such as massage, cupping, stretching or mobilisation will be used to help restore full functionality to the muscle and surrounding tissues. Once complete, the success of the treatment will be assessed and a recommended treatment plan will be discussed.

Usually massage involves oil and/or liniments being applied to the skin to help muscle relaxation. This does involve removing clothing. If you do not wish to disrobe, please let our staff member know at the commencement of the treatment. Many techniques can be performed over clothing.

## How many treatments do I need?

As we are all different, there is no definitive plan that suits everyone. Your practitioner will determine the best treatment plan according to your needs and preferences.

A treatment plan is set up dependant on several factors including:

- The duration and extent of your condition; how much scar tissue is present and how quickly your body can heal.
- Time considerations (especially for athletes working towards a specific event or timeframe).
- Your preferences – we feel that regular, preventative treatment is best, however you have three options:
  1. **Crisis care** – come when you feel sore, tight or in need of a session.
  2. **Maintenance care** – come regularly to prevent problems from manifesting.
  3. **Intensive schedule followed by maintenance care** – come for an intensive schedule to resolve a problem area and then maintain your health with regular massage to prevent this problem from re-occurring.



## Does massage hurt? Does massage bruise or leave marks?

Your therapist will always discuss any techniques with you before using them during a treatment, ensuring that they have your informed consent.

- Some forms of massage such as Remedial and Sports Massage use techniques that create microtrauma (microscopic tears or breakdowns in muscle fibres). This can often cause a dull achy discomfort that persists the following day and feels very similar to the pain in muscles after exercise. It is normal and will resolve over twelve to twenty-four hours.
- Oriental massage uses two techniques that can leave temporary marks on the skin. Cupping uses special glass jars that attach to the body with suction. These are left on for up to ten minutes and can leave non-painful suction bruises that can last for up to a week. Gua sha (“gwar-shar”) is where a special smooth-edged tool is used to “rub” the skin to release adhesions and stiffness in tight muscle. It too can leave non-permanent bruising that can last for up to a week after a treatment. **Please let your therapist know before the treatment if bruising may be a problem (i.e. before a wedding or party!)**

## What can I do to benefit my treatment?

1. Arrive at your appointment a few minutes early; this will ensure you are nice and calm prior to having your treatment. **Please turn off your mobile phone during your treatment.**
2. Avoid stimulants like coffee, cigarettes & other drugs at least two hours prior to your session. Avoid eating just prior to your session.
3. Ensure you are clean and if possible freshly showered.
4. If you are prescribed exercises ensure that you follow the suggested techniques. This will maximize your recovery and reduce the number of treatments required.
5. Massage can leave you a little disoriented after a treatment. Please ensure you sit for a few moments and have some water prior to getting in a car to drive home.
6. Drink plenty of water in the hours following a session. This will help to flush toxins from your system that are released during massage.