

Therapeutic Massage by Lucy --Newsletter--

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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

Joy is a net of love by which you can catch souls.

-Mother Teresa



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

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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.

Why Buy Organic?

Is the Higher Price Worth It?

While shopping in your grocery store's produce section, you may notice the organically grown apples are pocked and not as big and perfectly round as the conventional produce, but they are more expensive. What's the difference, and which do you choose? Your decision may significantly impact not only your health but the health of the planet and the economy.

DEFINING "ORGANIC"

Organic foods are derived from sustainable farming practices that maintain and replenish soil fertility without the use of toxic pesticides and fertilizers. These foods are minimally processed and do not include artificial ingredients or preservatives. On the other hand, conventional farms often rely heavily on pesticides, genetic modification, synthetic hormones, and antibiotics.

DOES IT REALLY MATTER?

To understand the fallout of conventional farming is to realize the

argument for organics. Bob Scowcroft, executive director of the Organic Farming Research Foundation, touches on the devastating consequences of pesticides. "DDT nearly eliminated the American eagle by affecting their ability to reproduce" he says. "Since World War II, we've introduced more than 9,000 chemicals into the environment. And we don't know the full impact on humans and different sized humans," he adds, alluding to studies revealing damaging effects on children.

When you buy organically certified foods, you're ensured they are free of pesticides, hormones, antibiotics, and genetic DNA modification.

"Organics are better for the environment, and it's an investment in the revitalization of rural America," Scowcroft says. Organic farms are usually smaller, family-owned farms contributing to the economy of struggling rural America, he explains. The organic choice may be a little more

expensive, but it's an investment in your health and the future.



Organic foods are free of pesticide residue.

Fabulous Figs

This little known fruit is rich in beauty benefits

Shelley Burns

As one of the oldest fruits enjoyed by humans, figs have a known history dating back to 9200 BCE in the Middle East. Part of the fig's mythology was that it had medicinal properties, like building muscle, enhancing fertility, and increasing stamina. Figs were considered a valuable gift in ancient times because of beliefs about these and other medicinal benefits.

Figs are enjoyed in Mediterranean countries, a region that has one of the healthiest diets in the world. Mediterranean cultures appreciate the nutritional potential of the fig, the benefits of which have been overlooked far too long in North America.

Figs are being used today to hydrate skin and restore its elasticity and firmness. They also help prevent cracked lips and

premature wrinkling. Figs have excellent hydration properties, since each has a water content of approximately 3/4 of a cup.

Alpha hydroxy acid (AHA) is used to refresh and brighten skin and is often used as an ingredient in skin exfoliation. Figs have natural AHA properties, and when ingested, behave somewhat like internal exfoliants. They also promote healthy digestion.

This ancient fruit also contains ficin, an antioxidant enzyme more powerful than papain (the active ingredient in papaya) for its ability to repair skin and slow aging.

Dried figs consist of a great source of soluble and insoluble fiber. Insoluble fiber has been shown to reduce

low-density lipoprotein (LDL), better known as bad cholesterol. Keep in mind that dried figs are high in natural sugars and should be used with caution if you have high blood sugar levels or diabetes.

Update your thinking on figs. They are not only a great source of fiber, but they are also a wonderful skin-enhancing resource.

Shelley Burns, a doctor of naturopathic medicine, completed studies at the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine, and has certification in complementary and integrative medicine from Harvard University.

*Remember,
today is the
tomorrow you
worried about
yesterday.*

-Dale Carnegie

Hello & happy Winter!

Chilly winter is here, & that means activities, over-eating, & holiday stress. While you're doing things for everybody else, remember to take care of you. Come in & have yourself a massage. It'll relax some of that stress & body aches. You deserve it!!

When you find yourself waking up stiff & hurting, stretch for a minute or two - it helps a lot. A long elaborate 'stretch session' is not necessary. A few minutes several times a day can do a tremendous amount of good. Your body needs movement everyday.

And as far as taking care of yourself, try NeriumAD for your skincare. It's an amazing & simple 1-step product with a 30-day money back guarantee. You can't beat that! I have used it for several months now & won't ever stop!! For more information or to order, please see my website at: www.lucydean.nerium.com

Remember, if you refer someone to me, you can enjoy \$25 off your next appointment after I've treated your referral!
Smiles always, Lucy

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