

Contraindications to Massage Therapies



Brighton Holistics

**Registered and Accredited College for the Federation of
Holistic Therapists, Guild of Holistic Therapists & The
Complementary Medical Association.**

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Disclaimer

Dear Reader

Nothing stated in this document should be considered as medical advice for dealing with a given problem. You should consult your health care professional for individual guidance for specific health problems. This text is for informational and educational purposes only, and is simply a collection of information in the public domain. Information conveyed herein is based on pharmacological and other records - both ancient and modern. No claims whatsoever can be made as to the specific benefits accruing from the use of any herb or nutrients.

Thank you Jon Matson MCMA, MFHT, BAPTAC & MGHT

Principal of Brighton Holistics & Lodge Hill Holistics



CONTRAINDICATIONS TO BODY MASSAGE

Massage is generally a safe treatment for most people. However there are health factors known as contraindications which may affect the type of treatment you can offer. Contraindications are usually discovered during the consultation process.

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Total contraindications

Total Contra-Indications – a situation in which no massage at all is appropriate. This is usually for reasons of practitioner protection and safety of Clients

- **Fever**
- **Contagious or infectious diseases, including cold and flue**
- **Under the influence of drugs or alcohol**
- **Recent accident or operations.**

Local

Local Contra-indication – a situation in which a local area of the client's body should not be massaged under any circumstances. This could be for the client's own comfort, to avoid spreading infection or to avoid further injury.

- **Skin diseases**
- **Undiagnosed lumps or bumps**
- **Varicose veins**
- **Cuts**
- **Bruises**
- **Inflammation**
- **Scar tissue: 1 year for major operation and 4 months for a small scar**
- **Sunburn**
- **Areas of undiagnosed pain**
- **Menstruation (periods)**
- **Fungal Infections**

Medical

If you suffer from any of the following conditions, massage can only take place once it has been approved by a GP:

- **Cardio-vascular conditions:** Thrombosis, phlebitis, heart conditions
- **High and Low Blood Pressure:** Clients with high blood pressure are more susceptible to forming blood clots; this is because blood vessel walls can become thicker over time, which allows blood to clot more easily in the narrower space within the artery. Low blood pressure can cause dizziness
- **Any condition already being treated by a GP or another complementary therapist**
- **Medical oedema:** Oedema is swelling of any organ or tissue due to accumulation of excess lymph fluid

- **Osteoporosis:** Fragile bones
- **Arthritis**
- **Diabetes:** This condition can cause arteriosclerosis, high blood pressure and oedema. Please note that some diabetic clients can become Hypoglycaemic (Low blood sugar) during treatments. Please also bear in mind that diabetics may have thinner skin when you are massaging particular areas of their body and may be more susceptible to blood clotting. Patients should always have any medication with them during a massage as well as their blood testing kit and foodstuffs such as glucose, sweets or biscuits
- **Cancer :** unless in terminal stages and then with medical permission
- **HIV & AIDS** while undergoing treatment (GP) please note that HIV is not in itself a contra-indication to treatment. Modern drug treatments mean that people with the virus can now lead normal, healthy, active lives as treatment is becoming more effective. However, where someone who is HIV positive is suffering from an illness relating to a compromised immune system, then this illness itself may be contra-indicated
- **Pregnancy:** All massage routines recommend that anyone who is pregnant is not treated until after 3 months, or maybe longer if they have a history of miscarriage. Anyone with any concerns after the first trimester (such as a history of miscarriage) should always consult their GP and advise them what type of massage they are considering.

Massage across the shoulders simulates the spleen meridian and gall bladder meridian amongst others. In Eastern Medicine it is accepted that during either massage, acupressure or acupuncture, stimulation of certain points along the spleen & gall bladder meridian channels is undesirable for pregnant women for the following reasons.

The gall bladder meridian has a 'descending point' along its pathway. If stimulated in the wrong area, this channel has a descending effect on the unborn foetus; in essence this means that it could descend to early during pregnancy, or in other words it could induce a miscarriage.

The spleen meridian has a 'dilation point' along its channel – this means that stimulation in the wrong area could dilate the cervix too early and again this could result in miscarriage of the pregnancy.

Massaging women from three months onwards (assuming there are no underlying problems or history of miscarriage) and on a regular basis can help them to be more relaxed - and their babies too. Some can experience a better pregnancy and birth experience. Massage helps the mother to stay relaxed and release harmful toxins, which can be beneficial for her and her baby. Always remember to advise the person you are massaging to drink plenty of water, both directly after the massage and up to 3 days afterwards. This helps the body to release the toxins and thus avoid headaches

Anyone in doubt about a condition should consult his or her doctor before receiving a treatment. Those receiving a massage may feel drowsy afterwards so it is advisable for them not to drive, operate machinery or drink alcohol straight after the treatment.



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