

To be touched

Receiving massage is . . . to be touched, with caring compassion, with knowledge of healing, with respect for body, mind, emotions, family and even soul.

It is forming a partnership to help heal weariness and fear, to relax in a profound manner and unlock the healing powers of the unconscious.

Massage is to look in another's eyes, to feel another's hands on your body, and know that you are safe, accepted without judgment, at your own comfort level, the only agenda being to help you.

Massage is to ask a trained professional to touch you in areas that are appropriate, but not normally touched, even in areas that may hold pain, that may hold deep fear, all because you trust their intention to facilitate your healing.

It is to allow yourself to be trusting and yet a bit vulnerable, for the purpose of better understanding your body, of releasing some of the tension you carry with you daily.

Massage is to be open to healing, while being respected and safe. It is to have your questions answered fully and to have your comfort levels respected.

Whether fully clothed or unclothed under draping, massage can be an important path of healing from the challenges of life's journey.

Massage is . . . a poem written in the deep tissues of your body to facilitate the release of pain and weariness, to calm your mind and to lift your spirit. This is . . . to be touched.

Earon S. Davis

What is new at Touching Well?

I have decided to change software for editing the printed version of this newsletter. I was getting so fed up with the changes in Publisher that I decided to transfer to OpenOffice. Things with computers are never *that* easy ...



Well Being by Melanie Jakobson

I have recently set up a Touching Well facebook page. Please have a look, maybe you *like* it. It can be found on facebook.com/TouchingWell. I tend to update the facebook page more frequently. I am working my way round this networking site, but many aspects remain a deep mystery to me. Some of you have already left feedback on

facebook, thank you.

I have been using my Hivamat 200 for one year! What a change have the "buzzy hands" (Deep Oscillation) brought to the Manual Lymph

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Drainage treatment! The tissues respond much faster, they become soft very quickly and the excess fluid drains away (well, eventually down the toilet). For massage this gives another

treatment option when the muscles are so tender that they go into spasm at the slightest pressure.

Wishing you a spring in your step,

Regina Dengler



One Saturday in July I had a phone call from the back stage of the Royal Concert Hall.

*Hi Regina
Many thanks for fixing
my foot
Be lucky
From
Roger Daltrey*

Roger Daltrey wanted a massage before the concert. Could I come. I was on my way and massaged most members of the band! It took me a couple of massages to pluck up courage to ask them to write in my feedback book.

*Amazing!! Have you
Greet... Hands
Thank you. Amazing!!
I feel alive again
Paul Freeman
Even better now!
Thanks
Julie*

Other on-site massage feedback

*I thought much more work would be needed to help me relax.
Sangenic, Mansfield*

*Fanatstic – very relaxing.
Shoulders feel much freer.
Amanda, Nottingham*

*Needed this today.
Julie, Sangenic, Mansfield*

Chair massage turns heads

I found a study that wanted to find out how chair massage in the workplace affects movement in the neck and upper back, as well as discomfort or pain experienced when performing workplace responsibilities. For this nineteen women working in administration and management in a company in Slovenia were given on-site chair massages twice per week for one month. The range-of motion in the neck and upper back was measured at the beginning and at the end. Women were also asked about their pain and discomfort before and after the massages.

Overall, women had fewer aches and pains in the neck and upper back. They could move their heads and upper back more freely after the massages. The study also found that massages twice a week were more effective than massage once a week or no massage ([J Altern Complement Med. 2011 Jul;17\(7\):617-22](#)). I agree, the more, the better. On the other hand, just one massage can have a dramatic impact on someone's life. During a recent on-site job a woman's whose chronic headache disappeared after a five minute on-site massage. I love it when people experience massage for the first time, the wow factor travelling round the office ..., gives me a buzz, too.



Massage for low back pain

Massage helps to ease chronic low back pain and improve function. This was confirmed by a randomised controlled trial published in July this year. It compares two types of massage, structural and relaxation massage with a control. Both types of massage worked well, there is not much difference in terms of outcomes between the massage groups.

The trial involved 400 patients with chronic low back pain (for at least three months). Their pain was “nonspecific”, meaning that it had no identified cause. They were randomly assigned to structural massage, relaxation massage or usual care (control group). Usual care is what would have happened anyway, often medications. The massage groups received 10 one hour long weekly massages. At the end of the trial (after 10 weeks) more than half of the massage patients said that their back pain was much better or gone, compared to one in 25 patients in the usual care group. A questionnaire showed that nearly twice as many massage patients (about two thirds) than the usual care patients (just over a third) functioned significantly better than at the outset of the trial. Patients in the massage groups spent fewer days in bed, were more active and used less anti-inflammatory medication than the controls. Even six months after the trial people in the massage groups showed better function, but a year after the trial the difference in function was minimal (*Ann Intern Med.* 2011 Jul 5;155(1):1-9). This confirms my approach to the treatment of back pain – first weekly massages for a while (hence the special offer – 4 weekly sessions for £130 instead of £152), then going onto monthly sessions to keep the benefits.

Stress and fertility

There is no doubt that undergoing infertility treatment is stressful, with high rates of anxiety and depression reported by many women. What is the effect of mind/body

therapy on women undergoing in vitro fertilization (IVF)? *They are more likely to get pregnant!* Women who undergo a mind/body programme for stress reduction have a significantly higher pregnancy rate (52%) than women on the control group (20%). This study was carried out by [Alice Domar](#), who devised this particular programme (*Fertil Steril.* 2011 Jun;95(7):2269-73). There is no reason why reducing stress before and during IVF treatments should not have a similarly positive effect, for example with yoga, meditation or [massage](#).

Unhealthy gums delay conception?

Women who find it difficult to conceive should take a look at their gums. Unhealthy gums (periodontal disease) can be a factor when it comes to getting pregnant.

In a study of 3,737 pregnant women, researchers discovered that those with gum disease took seven months to conceive, two months longer than did women with healthy gums. The problem was more marked among non-Caucasian women. In this group, those with gum disease took a full year longer to conceive compared to women with healthy gums (*Obstetrics & Gynecology* 2009 Dec; 114(6): 1239-48).

Frankincense for treating arthritis

The Three Wise Men of the Bible may have known something doctors don't – frankincense can help ease arthritis. Frankincense was one of the three gifts given to the baby Jesus – and happens to be a powerful antidote to arthritic pain.

Researchers from Cardiff University have discovered that the gum is a natural anti-inflammatory and as such can help reduce pain and improve mobility in people with osteoarthritis. The researchers are using *Boswellia frereana*, a rare form of frankincense, in a series of ongoing trials with arthritis sufferers (*Phytother Res.* 2010 Jun;24(6):905-12).





Lymphoedema conference

I have been at the BLS (British Lymphology Society) conference to hear what is new in "Lymphoedema". In a way there were lots of new things, but it was also lots of the same, if you know what I mean. There was a good choice of compression hosiery – different materials, strengths, designs, colours, patterns – with zip or velcro, on prescription or not. It is pleasing to see how much you can get on prescription – whether it will be prescribed when you need it is a different matter. In my enthusiasm I have written a [webpage](#) with all the links to suppliers of compression garments.

Acupuncture and lymphoedema

There were many talks and presentations, the most interesting one looked at improving quality of life for breast cancer patients with lymphoedema using acupuncture. Acupuncture did indeed improve the quality of life by helping general and oedema related problems after cancer treatment, such as a shoulder pain or lack of confidence. It was shown that it was safe to use acupuncture for people with lymphoedema, and the therapist had a challenge of not using the quarter of the body with the oedema. (). It was good to see a "alternative" treatment presented to a mainly NHS audience. People in Nottingham: If you have chronic pain, you can get a referral from your GP to the community acupuncture service. ([Eur J Oncol Nurs. 2011 Sep 12](#)). It was good to see a "alternative" treatment presented to a mainly NHS audience. People in Nottingham: If you have chronic pain, you can get a referral from your GP to the community acupuncture service.

More feedback

Having had this special massage for about 5 months I feel I am being pro active about my lymphoedema. Regina is encouraging and supportive, after treatment I come away feeling positive and determined to fight. I always leave a session with Regina feeling more positive and able to cope with my allotted +. Magita, Newark

The treatment to my right leg has reduced the lymphodema swelling - my leg is now softer and much more comfortable. I would recommend the treatment after surgery. I have especially enjoyed the 'facial' massage at the end of my session - my face feels great afterwards and I feel relaxed and pampered! Jean, Nottingham

I've been having massage with Regina for a year now, throughout a period involving lots of change. From the start I could feel that it was making a difference to how in touch I was with my body, and this has continued. I went for a massage today with a heavy heart and an even heavier head, I told Regina that I felt "worn out" and we were able to discuss beforehand whether an "energising" massage would really be beneficial to me - Regina pointing out that if the energy really isn't there ("running on empty"), it's not always a good idea! Instead I felt she was able to tune in to my state of mind and the massage reflected this, leaving me with a feeling that she had been helping me to access energy.

I'm a doctor and feel we often don't have a framework for understanding the way things like massage work - western medical teaching doesn't encompass energy theories. This doesn't stop me recommending it wholeheartedly.

Rebecca, Nottingham

I have a monthly massage with Regina to rebalance and restore. The No Hands Massage helps to stretch out tired muscles and soothe my over worked mind! I find it really beneficial to have regular time out for me and Regina is a fountain of knowledge and an empathic ear!

Julie, Beeston, Nottingham

