

## Pregnancy Massage

Many people are curious to what pregnancy massage is and how it differs from a normal massage. It can greatly relax the pregnant mother to be and help accommodate sore muscles that commonly occur as her body is accommodating a growing baby.

During pregnancy, a woman's body undergoes drastic changes physically, spiritually and physiologically. The physical changes may bring discomfort or stress on an emotional level as well. Pregnancy massage is an excellent tool for helping to alleviate these feelings and promote a healthy sense of well-being.

### What Is Pregnancy Massage?

Ideally, it is best to consult with your midwife or physician prior to signing up for pregnancy massage; especially if you are enduring a high-risk pregnancy. Enjoying pregnancy massage with a trained and experienced practitioner can be a wonderful and amazing experience throughout the entire nine months of pregnancy. If you are considered to be high-risk for some reason, many doctors will provide you with a written release so that you can enjoy the benefits.

Pregnancy massage may encompass anything from light massage work to a full body Swedish massage. It may include additional modalities such as cranial sacral therapy, circulatory work or reflexology techniques. The majority of massage therapists are trained in a variety of modalities along with massage.

Your best bet is to seek out a therapist who is actually certified in pregnancy massage techniques. This is helpful as it is vital to understand what positions and methods are safe for the mother and the baby growing inside. Having the knowledge of the anatomy of a pregnant woman and the changes her body are undergoing during pregnancy are extremely important.

For instance, the correct positioning of the mother changes as her pregnancy progresses. Once a woman is past 22 weeks pregnant for example, it is no longer considered safe for her to lay flat on her back. This is due to the fact that there are deep blood vessels that may become restricted from the weight of the baby. This can lead to decreased circulation for both the mother and unborn baby.

Additionally, there are specific areas on the mother's body that are best avoided during massage. For example, one such area is the space between the ankle bone and the heel. This location represents the vagina and the uterus in terms of pressure points and reflexology. There are a number of health professionals who practice acupuncture and reflexology, who consider stimulating this area a concern for causing early labor.

### What To Expect

Normally, a massage session lasts approximately 60 minutes to 90 minutes. The mother is often supported by various pillows as she lies on her side. Typically, she is draped with a sheet. The only part of the body that is exposed is the area being worked on. The majority of massage therapists choose to keep the room quiet. A comfortable temperature is maintained and occasionally, soft music is played in the background. It is recommended to avoid drinking copious amounts of liquids or eating a substantial meal prior to the massage.