

Tips to ENJOY YOUR Massage

Good communication is very important. Before the session, give accurate health information and let the therapist know what you want from the massage. During the massage session, speak up if you have any feedback on the amount of pressure, speed of movement, room temperature, music volume or lighting. Remember this is your time and you must feel comfortable and safe to be able to relax fully.

Wear what you will be comfortable in that will allow the therapist to work on the areas of your body that need it.

Breathing helps to facilitate relaxation. People often stop breathing when they feel anxious or a sensitive area is massaged. If you realise this is happening, remind yourself to breath. Try to stay relaxed and receptive.

If you find your thoughts are racing during the massage, one way to be more "body-centered" and to quiet the mind is to follow the hands of the massage therapist and focus on how the touch feels.

If you are dizzy or light headed after the massage, do not get off the table too fast.

It is best not to eat just before a massage session.

Drink extra water after a massage.

Allow for some open, quiet time after your massage session if possible. Sometimes you need a little time to integrate or absorb the results of the massage session.

Remember massage has its greatest benefits over time. The therapeutic effects of massage are cumulative, so the more often you get a massage, the better you will feel and the more quickly your body will respond.

If you are getting massage to address chronic muscular tension or recovery from a soft tissue injury, more than one session is usually needed, so be prepared to schedule several sessions.

Breathing for Relaxation - Three-Part Breath Dirga Pranayama

Benefits: Focuses the attention on the present moment, calms and grounds the mind.

This Pranayama exercise is often done while seated in a comfortable, cross-legged position, but it is also nice to do while lying on the back.

Begin by observing the natural inhalation and exhalation of your breath without changing anything. If you find yourself distracted by the mind thinking, try not to engage in the thoughts. Just notice them and then let them go and bring your attention back to the inhales and the exhales. Try to begin to inhale deeply through the nose, but do not force or strain the breath.

On each inhale, fill the belly up with your breath, expand the belly with air like a balloon. Fill the belly and rib cage up with air, then draw in just a little more air and let it fill the upper chest, all the way up to the collarbones.

On the exhale, let the breath go first from the upper chest, letting the rib cage, letting the ribs slide closer together, and lastly from the belly, drawing the navel back the spine.

Continue at your own pace, eventually coming to let the three parts of the breath happen smoothly without pausing. Continue for about ten breaths.