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What is foot reflexology?

How does foot reflex zone therapy work?

Reflexology is a form of therapy that treats the whole body by exercising pressure on certain reflex points, including points on the foot. Pressure is exercised on the reflex areas of the skin, which causes a signal that in turn stimulates the corresponding organ, tissue, gland or part of the body. It ensures improved circulation, discharge of waste substances via the lymphatic system, and harmonisation of the meridian system. The objective is to restore the natural balance and to encourage the body to heal itself. Reflex zone therapy is a perfect supplement to conventional healthcare, it is completely safe and leaves you feeling relaxed.

Origins of the development of foot reflexology

The origins of reflexology date back many thousands of years. This form of therapy has been applied in countries like Egypt, China, and India and by civilisations in North and South America. The current form of this therapy has its roots in zone therapy and in Chinese acupuncture.

William Fitzgerald, an American doctor, is the founder of zone therapy. He divided the body into 10 longitudinal zones, and he taught this treatment method to doctors and therapists. In 1917, he published his first book "Zone Therapy, or Relieving pain at home". In order to relieve pain, he exercised pressure on different parts of the fingers. Yet there was not much interest in the book, so Doctor Joe Riley, a friend of Fitzgerald, took the initiative to bring the discoveries to the attention of a wider public. However, the person who really made reflex zone therapy better known was Eunice Ingham, a physiotherapist. She discovered that feet were more sensitive than hands, and started to develop her theory of foot reflex zone therapy in the 1930s. This led to the so-called "Ingham-compression massage method". The premise of the theory is that the foot (sole) is a "map" of the rest of our body. In 1938, she published her book "Stories the feet can tell" in which she described her method. Eunice Ingham became known as the "mother of the reflex zone therapy". This method is still used, and is taught by her nephew Dr. Dwight C. Byers.

The therapy has a beneficial effect on many physical or psychological complaints of people who are healthy or ill.

Regular foot reflex zone massage has a preventative effect.

Foot reflexology can be applied in case of the following complaints:

Head complaints

Headaches, tension headaches, migraine, concentration disorders, colds, tympanitis, tinnitus...

Urinary complaints

Cystitis, infection of the urethra, calculus, kidney stones, incontinence, bedwetting...

Respiratory complaints

Pharyngitis, allergies including hay fever, sinusitis, asthma, hyperventilation...

Complaints of the cardiovascular system and the lymphatic system

Circulation problems, anxiety attacks, high/low blood pressure, palpitations, lymph cleaning, during and after infections...

Muscular and joint complaints

General back complaints, neck complaints, sciatica, hernia, lumbago, osteoporosis, arthrosis, arthritis, gout, myopathy, tennis elbow...

Gastrointestinal complaints

Gastrocardiac syndrome, stomatitis, esophagitis, gastritis, constipation, diarrhoea, intestinal wall infection, haemorrhoids, stomach problems, spastic colon...

Hormonal complaints

Depression, menstruation disorders, menopause complaints, immune problems, thyroid disorders, prostatitis, fertility problems, problems during pregnancy,...

General children's diseases

Crybabies, bedwetting, sleep disorders, acne, and many other complaints...

The regular session takes more or less one hour.

Reflexology does not only treat a specific complaint, it treats the whole body and improves all physical functions. It encourages the natural healing process to work faster and more efficiently. Foot reflexology is a unique method that manipulates the reflex areas with thumb and fingers. The underlying thought is that to be "ill" is a signal of a disrupted harmony between the unit of body and soul. The objective of foot reflexology is to restore this harmony. Massage, pressure, and heat transfer by the practitioner can remove blockages that have been formed in the body.

If there is a disruption, this will become noticeable during massage in the form of pain, impulses, itching, skin changes (callus, perspiration), colour differences etc. The place where these feelings arise indicates which organ or body part does not function well. When the blockages have been removed or dissolved, the body is able to heal itself again.

So foot reflexology does not heal, but helps you to heal. A foot reflexologist assumes that the 'whole' of a human being is treated and not just that part of the foot where the pain or complaint is.

Foot reflexology is a pleasant and completely safe method. Besides foot reflexology, healing can also be stimulated by using essential oils, better nutrition, learning to relax the body, etc...

During the first treatment, I always make an overview in order to gain a first impression of where the harmony has become disrupted and which areas need extra attention next time.

Possible reactions

People may experience some of the following reactions.

During treatment

- Above average perspiration
- Getting hot or cold
- Impulses
- Yawning/sleepiness
- Crying
- Welling emotions, etc

Just after treatment

- Dizziness
- Feeling of floating
- Walking on clouds
- Feelings of gladness and space
- Feeling energetic
- Listless

Days after the treatment (occasionally a few hours after treatment)

- Darker urine – toxins have been released and leave the body
- Old injuries, such as back complaints for example, return briefly and disappear again
- More secretion/excretion – defecation, perspiration, white flow, ear wax, etc
- Changed feelings in all sorts of ways.

Whatever may happen, it is a good sign, because something has been set in motion and the body is responding to the treatment. As every human being is different, everyone responds differently.

Let us know what happens during and after treatment, and tell us next time about the interim period. This helps us to move forward...

The number of treatments that are required cannot be established in advance for each client. Your personal background and general constitution are too complex. Depending on the complaint, an average of 1-12 treatments is needed to achieve the required result. For acute complaints this will be less, but chronic complaints may need more time to heal.

It is preferable for the first four treatments to be every 2-3 days. Subsequent massages are preferably once a week or once every two weeks. Treatment once every three weeks is enough for regular preventative foot reflex zone massage.

It is recommended to drink plenty of water and/or herbal tea, and try to avoid coffee, black tea, and/or alcohol.

