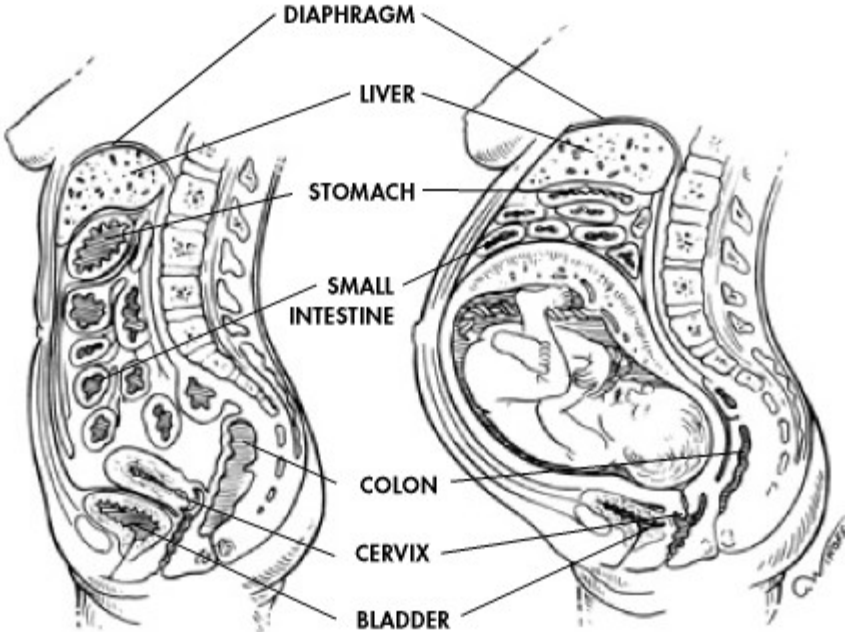


PRENATAL MASSAGE

By Spring Moffitt



I. Prenatal massage is:

- a. A set of techniques and standards that have been established to be used when performing massage therapy on a pregnant woman to support the physiologic, structural, and emotional well-being of both the expectant mother and the unborn child
- b. During pregnancy a woman's body undergoes tremendous changes from the very obvious increase in weight which taxes the musculoskeletal system to shifts in the production of hormones that may affect her emotional state.
- c. Prenatal massage is a supportive system of care that helps a pregnant woman adjust to the changes brought about by the formation of a new body shape and the adjustments made by that body to provide for the growing baby.

II. Prenatal massage is also known as:

- a. Pregnancy massage
- b. Maternity massage
- c. It has been expanded to perinatal massage which includes labor and postpartum massage care

III. History of Prenatal massage:

- a. Ayurvedic medicine has been practiced for about 3000 years. Texts from this discipline have entries about rubbing pregnant women with oils.
- b. Sculptures of pregnant Eskimo women show that the rubbing of the back was used during labor.
- c. Doulas were Greek slaves that attended the women. This ancient tradition expanded throughout many parts of the European world.
- d. In 1979 Carole Osborne-Sheets began research which led to comprehensive training programs throughout North America

IV. Key people in this field

Carole Osborne-Sheets

Set standards and started training programs in North America

Tiffany Field

Conducted research in touch therapy on women

Marshall Klaus

Has written a large number of books on pregnancy and how to care for oneself during that time

Prenatal massage affects a woman on all levels

Prenatal massage affects a woman physiologically, structurally and emotionally. Physiologically it affects things such as hormone, gastrointestinal, urinary and circulatory systems.

**Structurally it reduces strains placed on the musculoskeletal system.
Emotionally it gives a woman a feeling of support and reduces stress levels.
of the**

**Improves circulation
Alleviates pain in the back, neck and joints
Reduces swelling
Increases flexibility
Eases gastrointestinal issues
Reduces stress levels
May decrease labor time and pain**

Circulation

**Helps prevent spider and varicose veins
Increases blood flow to the uterus
Reduction of blood pressure
Increased blood and lymph circulation
Reduction of edema and the swelling caused by it.**

Pain relief

Reduces muscle cramps
Alleviates soft tissue pain
Relieves musculoskeletal pain caused by increased weight
The decline of pain also helps to diminishes fatigue and depression levels

Gastrointestinal

**Improves gastrointestinal functioning
Stimulates production of food absorption hormones to counter nutritional problems by
women with morning sickness
Acupressure points on the wrist help decrease nausea and morning sickness**

Reduced Stress levels

Stabilizes hormone production
Increased well being for both mother and unborn child
Gives the expectant mother a feeling of support
Aids in reducing fatigue and depression

High risk factors

Rh-negative
Multiple baby pregnancy
Previous miscarriages
Diabetes
Renal, cardiac, liver or connective tissue disorders
Exposure to drugs or hazardous materials
Mothers under 20 or over 35

1st trimester

Most common time for miscarriages
Avoid deep tissue work in the abdominal and lower back regions
Tender breasts may cause discomfort when laying on the stomach
Around the ankle there are 2 acupressure points that can stimulate the uterus, as well
as one on the upper back, one on the hand and on the feet. Avoid these to prevent
causing a miscarriage.

2nd and 3rd trimester controversy

Many massage therapists use a table with a hole cut out in the middle, a sling to hold the belly or pillows for the woman to rest on so that she may lie in a prone position. There are some who advocate a side laying position or chair massage because the prone position can cause excessive intrauterine pressure, strain of the lumbar area, and pressure on tender breasts. While extended time in the supine position may cause dizziness, shortness of breath and decreased circulation due to compression of the Vena Cava as well as strain to the sacroiliac joints.

Equipment

•Many oils are not to be used on pregnant women. Double check before using

Target Market

d. Expectant mothers

Where to learn

•**International Professional School of Bodywork**

Phone : (858) 748-8827 Toll Free: (800) 586-8322 Fax: (858) 748-8827
Body Therapy Associates 11650 Iberia Place #137 San Diego, CA 92128
<http://www.bodytherapyassociates.com/index.php>

•**Alive & Well! Institute of Conscious Bodywork**

Phone: (415) 258-0402 Toll Free: (888) 259-5961 Fax: (415)-258-0635
100 Shaw Drive San Anselmo, CA 9496

•**Charleston School of Massage**

<http://www.charlestonmassage.com>

•**The National Academy of Massage Therapy and Healing Sciences**

Phone: (215) 412-4121 Fax: (215) 412-4123
P.O. Box 1470 Kulpsville, PA. 19443
www.nationalmassage.com

•**Desert Institute of the Healing Arts**

Phone: (520) 882-0899 Toll Free: (800) 733-8098
639 North Sixth Avenue Tucson, AZ 85705
www.DesertInstitute.org

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