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# What Is Reflexology?

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## Reflexology Gains Popularity

*Where conventional medicine has failed, natural medicine can make a real difference!*

Far Eastern cultures have been using alternative treatments for thousands of years. However, in most places of the world, natural medicine is the first line of defense against sickness and disease. Even the most technically advanced countries such as China and Japan, appreciate the effectiveness and simplicity of natural medicine.

In fact, we could stand to take some of their knowledge to heart these days. In our society today, one that relies heavily on chemically laden prescription drugs, psychotherapy and surgical procedures to "heal" the sick, there has never been a better time to look into such alternatives. Where conventional medicine has failed, natural medicine can make a real difference.

Natural medicine and alternative treatments in general is a booming industry. Our society has become very interested in how to help cure us from common problems such as allergies, depression and anxiety. But with so many products claiming to be the next miracle cure, how do you really know which kind of alternative therapy to use? Maybe it is time to skip the pills and give reflexology a try.

If you are unfamiliar with reflexology, here are the basics. Reflexology is the practice of applying pressure in a strategic manner to areas of the feet and hands, and even the face and ears. Reflexologists see the hands and feet as an open door to the bodies systems. Each section of the feet and hands correlate to a specific organ. By stimulating nerves on specific areas of the feet and hands, you can stimulate blood flow and eliminate toxin buildup in the corresponding organs and systems of the body.

Although reflexologists cannot diagnose or claim to cure a sickness or disease, the results speak for themselves, making it one of the most sought after treatments today. In fact, celebrities pay an arm and a leg for just a few minutes of reflexology.

Not only is it beneficial as a tool for relaxation and stress relief, but it is also an effective tool for improving circulation; relieving pain, and as an immune and nervous system stimulator. In fact, many people with illnesses such as allergies; chronic sinus problems; acid reflux; migraines; PMS; menopause; insomnia; fertility problems and even arthritis have been helped tremendously by reflexology treatments.

### Quick Reflexology Fact

*If you are really serious about learning the techniques, there are numerous online reflexology schools where you can take classes and learn in-depth techniques for more specified sicknesses and diseases. Try something simple for starters, such as relieving a headache, once you have witnessed the benefits, you may find yourself hooked. I started using reflexology therapy a few years ago just for the purpose of relieving the tension headaches I was experiencing due to stress.*

However, if you do not like the idea of others touching your feet, or you do not have the big bucks to shell out, you can opt to learn basic reflexology yourself. I prefer this method not

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only because it is free, but also because it is extremely convenient. If you want to dig in and learn the basics, there are many online reflexology courses you can take.

Moreover, many adult education programs offer weekend reflexology programs. Check with your local school district to find a class near you. Although these weekend seminars will not authorize you to claim yourself as a reflexologist, you will learn enough to effectively treat yourself and your family.

The bottom line is that reflexology has proved to be a therapy that is beneficial for everyone. It is the perfect complimentary medicine whether or not you must take prescription drugs or not. Once you try it you will understand why reflexology has found a permanent place in the health industry.

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## Reflexology...A Quick Definition

Reflexology, or zone therapy, is a complementary therapy, intended for use alongside conventional medical care and not as a replacement. It is the practice of stimulating nerves on the feet, hands and ears, in order to encourage a beneficial effect on some other parts of the body, or to try to improve general health. Reflexology is most commonly performed on the feet, moving on to the hands and/or ears where physical restraints (contraindications), such as veruccas or fractures, apply.

There is no one fixed theory to explain reflexology. All practitioners believe that areas on the foot correspond to areas of the body, and that reflexology assists the self-healing process.

Some practitioners believe these zones to reflect the energy (Qi) body, and that blockages of energy in the body are reflected through "grit" or "lumps" on the foot. A therapist will apply pressure in the form of relaxing massage to these areas, in order to stimulate the corresponding area and thereby remove blockages in the energy body.

Contrary to some beliefs, reflexology does not seek to diagnose or cure medical conditions - merely imbalances in the life energy or Qi of the body. There are concerns over the efficacy of this treatment, and about the safety of using such a therapy instead of conventional medicine, which have resulted in some studies to investigate reflexology.

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## Reflexology Expectations

*Bring your body to a state of well-being!*

Although reflexology is proven to be beneficial for a multitude of problems, your reflexologist

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cannot diagnose or claim to cure any diseases. They are not medically trained to do so. The practice of reflexology is meant to bring your body to a state of well-being. Only in this state is your body able to heal itself and perform at an optimal level. If your body is full of toxins, your immune system is severely compromised, making you much more likely to succumb to sickness and disease.

Once you have made the decision to visit a trained reflexologist, you may be wondering what you can expect from him or her. You may also be asking yourself, what if I am embarrassed about my feet, or my feet are ticklish, how will I be able to handle the therapy? All of these are viable questions.

As far as the appearance of your feet, don't worry about them. All feet are different and there is nothing to be ashamed about. The only possible thing that might come up in direct relation to the appearance of your feet may be if you have a severe problem with corns or the like. In this case, your reflexologist may recommend treatment options.

Ticklish feet are not usually a problem for a reflexologist. Once pressure is applied, the sensation will quickly turn from a tickle to massage and you should be ok. Very, and I mean very few people that claim to have ticklish feet are unable to go through with the therapy.

### **Quick Reflexology Fact**

*Reflexology has been shown to relieve many common pregnancy complaints including headache, nausea, backache, stress and anxiety, sleeplessness, fatigue, constipation, swollen ankles and digestive problems. Furthermore, in one study, women that had at least 10 reflexology sessions showed reduced labor times and complications than women who did not have the treatments. Children can benefit from reflexology in many ways as well.*

Your therapy session will begin with a questionnaire or one on one question and answer session. This is, of course to get your personal history and determine where your therapy should be most concentrated.

For example, if you are going in suffering from frequent migraines and neck pain, your reflexologist will concentrate on the areas of the feet and sometimes the hands, in areas that deal with the head and neck. Of course, you will be treated in all areas of the feet. In order to bring your body to a state of well-being, you must detoxify your organs and this is exactly what happens during reflexology therapy.

After the initial interview, your ears, feet and hands will probably be thoroughly looked over for discolorations and tender spots. According to the theories reflexology stems from, these things can be warning signs that correlating body parts are not functioning, as they should.

At this point the therapy will begin. It will usually start with rubbing of the ears, hands or feet and then will turn into pressing. It closely mimics acupuncture, but without needles. By pressing in certain areas of the feet, hands and even the ears, the brain will send signals and release neurochemicals to stop pain and relieve tension.

Probably one of the biggest expectations is the relaxation factor. It is true; you will become very relaxed during the therapy. Believe it or not, some people even fall asleep. It is one of the single most powerful ways to relax and eliminate stress in your body. Once you try it you will be a believer, furthermore you will be hooked.

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## **Reflexology Research**

*Reflexology is the practice of strategically applying pressure to areas of the feet and hands!*

Many studies have been done in relation to the effectiveness of reflexology. If you are unfamiliar with reflexology, here are the basics. Reflexology is the practice of strategically applying pressure to areas of the feet and hands as they correspond with specific body organs.

By stimulating nerves on specific areas of the feet and hands, we can stimulate blood flow and eliminate toxin buildup in the corresponding organs and systems of the body. Reflexology is safe and effective for everyone. Furthermore, it can and should be used throughout a lifetime.

So how can reflexology really help you? Research has found that not only is it beneficial as a tool for relaxation and stress relief, but it is also an effective tool for improving circulation; relieving pain, detoxification, recovering from surgery, and as an immune and nervous system stimulator. In fact, many people with illnesses such as allergies; chronic sinus problems; acid reflux; migraines; PMS; menopause; insomnia; fertility problems and even arthritis have been helped tremendously by reflexology treatments.

Because reflexology works to put the body in a state of well-being, it is beneficial to every system in the body. Reflexology has been shown to relieve many common pregnancy complaints including headache, nausea, backache, stress and anxiety, sleeplessness, fatigue, constipation, swollen ankles and digestive problems. Furthermore, in one study, women that had at least 10 reflexology sessions showed reduced labor times and complications than women who did not have the treatments.

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Children can benefit from reflexology in many ways as well. A few of the most common reasons for conventional medical treatment today are ear infections, constipation, colic and bed-wetting. Reflexology has been shown to dramatically improve these problems, and many more in children.

In fact, research has actually shown that children with cerebral palsy who received reflexology work actually had increased growth rate over the kids who did not receive therapy. The list goes on and on.

In a society that relies on chemically laden prescription drugs to cure the sick, especially in the elderly sector of society, reflexology is providing success stories worth examining. Did you know that elderly patients that routinely get reflexology treatment could reduce

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cholesterol, lower and maintain blood pressure and treat painful digestion better than drugs? Not only that but elderly patients that have reflexology mats in their homes experience less pain and a greater sense of control when walking.

And this is just the tip of the iceberg. For patients recovering from surgery, reflexology can be a dream come true. Studies have shown that patients that received reflexology treatment after surgery experienced far less pain than the patients that received painkillers alone. Moreover, reflexology was shown to be more effective than catheterization in patients with retention of urine after surgery.

Reflexology has made its mark in the world of alternative therapies because it works. If you doubt that reflexology works, try it and see the results for yourself. Once you try it you will be a believer and most importantly, you will be hooked for life. Find yourself a good reflexologist, or better yet, learn the techniques for yourself. Having the knowledge to treat yourself and your family is one of the smartest things you can do.

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## **The Facts About Reflexology**

Reflexology is the practice of strategically applying pressure to areas of the feet and hands as they correspond with specific body organs.

Reflexology is becoming a more and more popular term in today's society. Like no other time in history, people are diligently seeking alternative medical treatments. So what is reflexology and how can it help you? I have outlined the basics for you.

### **What is reflexology?**

Reflexology is the practice of strategically applying pressure to areas of the feet and hands as they correspond with specific body organs. By stimulating nerves on specific areas of the feet and hands, we can stimulate blood flow and eliminate toxin buildup in the corresponding organs and systems of the body. And it is not only limited to the feet and hands, although they are the most widely used areas. Reflexology can also be used on the face and the ears as well.

### **What problems is reflexology beneficial for?**

Reflexology is a holistic treatment and is used for a variety of ailments. Not only is it beneficial as a tool for relaxation and stress relief, but it is also an effective tool for improving circulation; relieving pain, and as an immune and nervous system stimulator. In fact, many people with illnesses such as allergies; chronic sinus problems; acid reflux; migraines; PMS; menopause; insomnia; fertility problems and even arthritis have been helped tremendously by reflexology treatments.

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### **What reflexology and reflexologists are not**

Although reflexology is proven to be beneficial for a multitude of problems, your reflexologist cannot diagnose or claim to cure any diseases. They are not medically trained. Reflexology is meant to bring your body to a state of well-being. Only in this state is your body able to heal itself. If your body is full of toxins, your immune system is severely compromised, making you much more likely to succumb to sickness.

### **Do I need to be on a special diet for reflexology to work?**

Although you do not need to be on a special diet to get benefits from reflexology, it is always highly recommended to watch what you put in your body. As many holistic nutritionists would agree, you will find that it is very beneficial to consume as much whole foods as possible.

Keep in mind that processed foods are one of the biggest sources for the toxins we build up in our systems; the very toxins that reflexology strives to rid the body of. Outside of a whole foods diet, the basics of a good diet always apply. Make sure to drink plenty of water, cut down, or better yet eliminate caffeine, eat a well-balanced diet, exercise and get adequate rest. Reflexology will help take care of the stress!

### **Do I have to go to a professional or can I do it myself?**

Reflexology treatment offers two treatment options: do it yourself or get the assistance of a trained reflexologist. Taking a look at your goals should help you determine which route to take. If you are looking for immediate results for an impending problem, a trained reflexologist may be the way to go.

However, I found it more beneficial to learn the techniques myself so that I can help my family and myself whenever I need to for free. Many of the techniques are basic and can be learned quite easily. If you want to start out simple, try to get rid of a tension headache. This is the first technique I learned. And not only did it work, it reassured me that I can treat myself.

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