

## Reflexology

Reflexology is the practice of applying pressure to the feet and hands utilizing specific thumb, finger and hand techniques without the use of oil, cream or lotion based on a system of zones and reflex areas that reflect an image of the body on the feet and hands with a premise that such work effects a physical change in the body.

Research has shown the specific techniques of reflexology to be effective and beneficial in many ways. A survey of 170 reflexology studies from 21 countries shows that reflexology is effective, impacting a variety of physical and psychological concerns. Reflexology:



**Creates relaxation:** From the moment the reflexologist's hands start their work, the relaxation begins as shown in research using EEG brain activity. All together, 24 studies demonstrate reflexology's relaxation effects.

**Reduces pain:** Pain reduction following reflexology work is documented in 27 studies including research showing impact on individuals of all ages and health states

**Ameliorates health concerns:** Research shows that reflexology work helps individuals of all ages with some 78 health concerns ranging from aggressive behavior in children to urinary concerns of the elderly.

**Improves blood flow:** Separate studies show that reflexology work increases blood flow to the feet, brain, kidneys and intestines.

**Aids post-operative recovery:** Reflexology work aids recovery after surgery as shown by several studies, reducing pain and lessening the use of post operative analgesics. Impact on physiological measures (e. g. blood pressure and cholesterol; measurements by ECG, EEG, and MRI)

**Enhances medical care:** Reflexology helps where nothing else can for many: phantom limb pain sufferers, neuropathy patients, and hemodialysis patients to name a few.

**Benefits mental health:** Research demonstrates that reflexology can reduce depression (11 studies) and anxiety (9 studies).

**Complements cancer care:** Pain, nausea, vomiting, and/or anxiety eased for chemotherapy patients following reflexology work as shown by 16 studies from 7 countries.

**Eases pregnancy, delivery and post-partum effects:** Women who received reflexology experienced shorter labor times and used less analgesia. In addition, reflexology showed a positive impact on postpartum depression, anxiety, urination and bowel movements.

In general terms, the benefits of reflexology have to do with the reduction of stress. Because the feet and hands help set the tension level for the rest of the body, they are an easy way to interrupt the stress signal and reset homeostasis, the body's equilibrium.