

## What are the Contraindications to Massage Treatment?

Massage treatment is non-invasive, relaxing and natural. It is therefore generally considered a safe treatment for most people. Contraindications are important to consider to protect health and safety of you, the client, your family, your therapist, your therapist's family, and your therapist's other clients and their families. While nothing in life is guaranteed, observing this informed consent is still the best way to limit contagion and ensure a safe, beneficial encounter. Note that the therapy offered is not that much different from the effects of exercise on the body. So if you would not go to a gym, that is a sign that you may also not want a massage.

There are three types of contraindication:

- TOTAL, when massage should not be performed at all.
- LOCAL, when massage can be performed but not over the contraindicated areas.
- MEDICAL, when massage can only be performed once medical permission has been granted.

### Total Contraindications

Please note that your therapist has clients who are immunocompromised (including clients during or after cancer treatment, people with autoimmune disease, athletes who may have over trained, or the elderly). When you have any of these conditions, **please do not book a massage**:

- Fever
- Contagious diseases, including any cold or flu, no matter how mild it may seem
- Under the influence of drugs or alcohol including hangovers. This includes prescription pain medication, or any preparation on which you should not operate machines, or that lead to dizziness and blood pressure changes
  - Note that even OTC pain medication may interfere with your ability to give feedback on appropriate firmness of the massage
  - This therapist does not intend to inflict pain or any harm
- Recent surgery or acute injuries without physician clearance for massage therapy
- Neuritis
- Skin diseases (including warts, herpes, and other viral or bacterial conditions that can be transferred by contact with broken as well as intact skin)
- If you already do not feel so good, are under the weather, may have an autoimmune flare-up

### Local Contraindications

The therapist can massage but not over any areas affected by:

- Varicose veins (only very light work, if any)
- Undiagnosed lumps or bumps
- Pregnancy (no prone work, sideline work is typical)
- Bruising (if less than 72 hours old)
- Cuts (open, scabs)
- Abrasions
- Sunburn, burns, newer tattoos
- Undiagnosed pain
- Acute inflammation and flare-ups, including arthritis
  - No massage or manual therapy if it is red, hot, swollen or painful

## Medical Contraindications

If you suffer from any of the following conditions, massage may only take place once your Physician has approved it before your session **in writing**.

- Cardio-vascular conditions (thrombosis, phlebitis, hypertension, heart conditions, pace-makers)
- Any condition already being treated by a medical practitioner
- Edema
- Psoriasis or eczema
- High blood pressure, or uncontrolled blood pressure
- Osteoporosis
- Cancer // treatment – other modalities may be available to you
- Nervous or psychotic conditions, particularly untreated or undertreated
- Epilepsy
- Diabetes
- Bell's palsy, trapped or pinched nerves
- Gynecological infections (candida infections can be very contagious even from other, non-gynecological areas of the body)

### Does a contraindication mean that treatment cannot take place?

Not always. In fact, massage can be very therapeutic for many medical conditions. However, in the above cases it is best to have advice from your physician. Massage therapists, unless they are also qualified doctors, may not, under law, attempt to diagnose a condition.

**Please notify your therapist if you are taking any topical or patch drugs or have been taking these within the last 2 weeks – no matter whether OTC or prescription. This is especially so for any hormone preparation. They are meant to be absorbed through the skin and any contact is hazardous for this therapist. If you have to continue the use of such preparations for any reason, you have the option of selecting a different therapist who is not sensitive to such preparations. Alternatively, your therapist will wear gloves throughout the hands-on treatments.**

**While I am sincerely hoping for your full disclosure of any medical condition and all medications on your intake sheet, this does not always occur. When in doubt, the therapist will don nitrile gloves for protection or reserve the right to discontinue treatment.**

If you have further questions or concerns, please contact us for more information.

*I have understood my role as informed client when it comes to contraindications to massage therapy, and agree to comply with all of the above. This agreement is valid until revoked.*

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Signature (print name)

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Date