

## Important Massage Therapy Concepts

### **Mandatory requirement for RMT to consult with patient regarding their treatment:**

As a requirement of 2019, B.C. medical legislation, it has been mandated for Registered Massage Therapist (RMT) to consult with the patient about the following before a treatment can commence, this ensures patient can provide informed consent without interference.

Furthermore, it has been formalized to require a consent prior to any treatment begins. Treatment plans require a verbal consent; and if the treatment is requiring modifications that needs to be documented and again consent must be provided.

### **Agency, Age of consent - adults, children, mature-minors, and guardianships**

A patient, firstly must have *capacity* to give informed *consent* to treatment. So, under BC law a patient under 19 years is legally considered under the Infant Act, and a parent or legal guardian must provide such consent as well may have to be present during the treatment. However, the Infant Act does provide criteria for determination of mature-minor's consent (of 16 years plus?). Persons, that have lost capacity must have a legal guardian must present to provide consent.

Furthermore, patient has the *autonomy* to make decisions about their care, whether to receive a treatment or not, modify a treatment, end a treatment without undue influence from a therapist or anyone else. In addition, the RMT has a strict Code of Ethics and other legislative rules that define their scope of practice; and is mandated by law to follow a protocol of conduct.

### **The 2020 Covid-19 pandemic and information:**

BC CDC, has the official explanation of all the risks to this SAR2-COVID19 (covid19) under the current Provincial Health Emergency to which I refer you to. Since massage therapy involves risk for patient, RMT and others; and will be expected to provide (covid19) health information on an ongoing basis as a term and condition of treatment.

### **Harm Reduction – the keys to a Preventative Communicable Disease Program**

- PPE: Prevention is key and the mask when worn properly within the clinic build during the treatment or within a personal space during a medical treatment is the primary line of defense against further transmissions of disease including covid. Whether mandated or not, BC Health Authorities still recommend mask wearing indoors regardless of vaccination status.
- Vaccination serves to reduce severe symptoms, hospitalization and death.

### **Patient disclosure of health information is private and protected by BC PIPA**

All patient health information should be disclosed to the therapist as soon as possible. I, the patient, have disclosed all medical conditions, including any mental conditions for which I have received treatment for within the last 12 months, to the best of my knowledge.

If patient suspects COVID exposure then they should see medical attention, call 811 or your doctor. And patient will report a positive test to the clinic as soon as possible.

For more information contact BC Centre for Disease Control, <http://covid-19.bccdc.ca/> .  
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### **Massage Therapy Benefits:**

Registered Massage Therapy is a physical or touch modality using hands, fingers, elbows, forearms or such to adjust, manipulate, or mobilize soft-tissue such as muscles, tendons, ligaments, joint capsules, lymphatic and vascular structures, neural structures and other tissues within or below the skin. RMT's rely on patient history and utilize various motion or touch assessments as well.

RMTs are trained in hydrotherapy as well as rehabilitative exercises not limited to stretching or strengthening and may prescribe such as part of a treatment plan. They can also provide one-on-one instruction for such.

The benefits of massage are generally pain reduction, increased mobility or ease of movement due to its effects on the previously mentioned structures. As well as other states of well-being both physical and mental.

### **Therapeutic Zone and Discomfort (Therapeutic Pain) Scale**

Massage therapy is not SPA massage; like other manual therapies has a therapeutic zone within the patient's tolerance. It is thought as level of therapeutic touch may elicit some discomfort in the patient but is tolerable by the patient. This level varies from individual, technique, part of body and other factors. The RMT is going to check in with the patient a few times during the treatment regarding patient's tolerance. Some find it useful, to refer to this zone with a scale: (0 no touch, 1 very light, 2 relaxation, 3 within tolerance, aka the therapeutic zone, 4 limits of tolerance, 5 stop, and readjust).

The RMT relies their skilled touch but ultimately the responsibility is the patients to communicate verbally, if the RMT exceeds patient tolerance or treatment becomes uncomfortable for any reason, the patient should modify, change or stop the treatment at any time. The RMT will monitor the treatment and check in periodically with the patient.

### **Risks of massage therapy:**

Any person-to-person contact is a risk of covid-19. Although masks due reduce transmission. Masking, reduced contact risk and vaccines reduce illness.

Like other manual therapies, massage may temporarily aggravate symptoms of pain, other sensations, induce discomfort and stiffness including bruising, achiness, skin irritation and such. However, these symptoms typically resolve in a day or so; and then the benefits of the massage may present.

It is important to consult with your RMT, pharmacist or a medical doctor before applying any topical ointment or taking any oral medication or natural remedies to address the previous mentioned symptoms post-massage in order to prevent further exacerbations or unforeseen negative interactions, with medications and nature remedies.

### **Body Areas to be Treated and disrobement:**

It is imperative that the patient understands why the therapist may require to touch areas of the body as indicated on the diagram within patient intake form(s). Furthermore, the RMT may suggest other areas of the body that would be beneficial to treat as well during the discussion or possibly during the treatment. The RMT will ask for your consent and will chart this in your file. The RMT may assign patient self-care activities as well.

An RMT can modify the treatment if a patient is concerned about *disrobement*, or *draping* for any other reason. A patient is welcome to wear sports shorts and bra, or any amount of clothing and covering required to ensure their comfort.