

BodySense

autumn 2016

Caring for Our Elders Through Bodywork

The Miracle Beneath
Our Skin: Fascia

Oh No! Bodily Noises

Cupping Therapy Explained

PLUS

“How is the lotion my MT uses
different than the lotion I use at
home?”

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EDITOR'S NOTE

DARREN BUFORD, EDITOR

DARREN@ABMP.COM, @DARRENBUFORD



Body Sense Editor Darren Buford

Faraway, So Close

Touch Transcends

A little more than six years ago, I got word that my sister-in-law, Carol, was diagnosed with carcinoid liver cancer. My immediate reaction was a feeling of disbelief and then

helplessness, especially since I lived more than 1,000 miles from my brother's family.

But after consulting with my wife, we agreed that the one thing we could offer Carol, even from so far away, was touch therapy. We located a practitioner in her area who specialized in oncology massage and end-of-life care. Christi, the massage practitioner, was patient, compassionate, and understanding of Carol's situation.

Carol was only 52 years old when she passed away, but I have faith that the massage Christi provided helped ease Carol's pain—as well as her family's pain—even for just the brief period of time it takes to receive massage.

I hope you enjoy Cindy Williams's article "The Heart Knows No Wrinkles" in this issue. It's a wonderful, heartfelt piece about the value of touch for those who are suffering, specifically the elderly in our lives who so often do not receive the touch that can offer comfort and relief.



Is massage part of your ongoing wellness strategy?*

58%

Yes, I receive weekly or biweekly massages as preventive care to keep my body healthy.

22%

I receive occasional massage, but do not include it as part of my wellness strategy.

9%

I get regular massage, but hadn't thought about it as part of a wellness strategy. I will now!

9%

No. I only get massage when something hurts.

*Results from www.massagetherapy.com poll.

Body Sense

massage, bodywork & healthy living

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staff

DARREN BUFORD, Editor
darren@abmp.com

LESLIE A. YOUNG, Contributing Editor
leslie@abmp.com

KARRIE OSBORN, Senior Editor
karrie@abmp.com

BRANDON TWYFORD, Associate Editor
brandon@abmp.com

MARY BARTHELME ABEL, Contributing Editor
marya@abmp.com

TRACY DONLEY, Advertising Manager
tracyd@abmp.com

ANDREA BROWN, Advertising Coordinator
andrea@abmp.com

AMY KLEIN, Art Director
amy@abmp.com

JAMES SUTHERLIN, Senior Designer
james@abmp.com

TAMRA MCILVAIN, Graphic Designer
tamra@abmp.com

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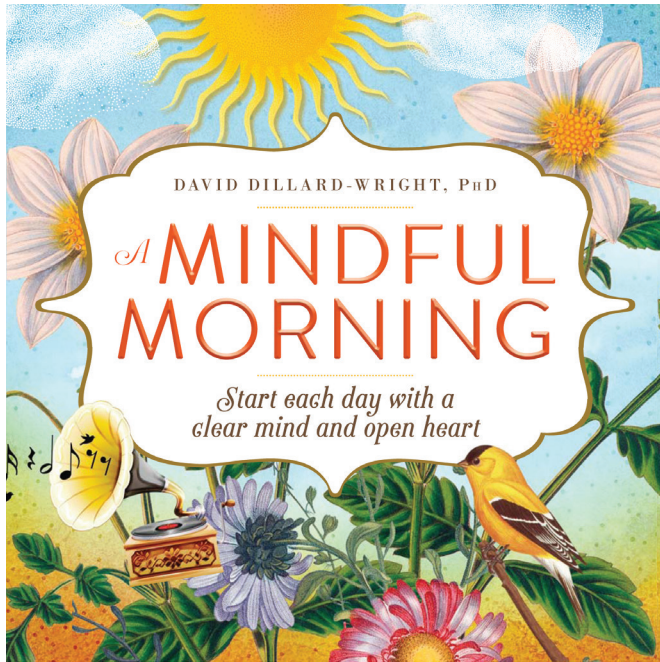
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A MINDFUL MORNING

Inspired by 200 quotes and mindfulness exercises, readers can tackle life with clear heads and positive energy. Author David Dillard-Wright, PhD, teaches ethics, philosophy, and religion at the University of South Carolina, Aiken. His simple moments of awareness can help you approach every day with composure, confidence, and tranquility. The 284-page paperback is available for \$14.99 at www.adamsmediastore.com.

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Jessica Brantley has created an aromatherapy line for a mindful lifestyle. These handcrafted blends include Abundance (bergamot and cinnamon), Balance (lemongrass and frankincense), and Creativity (palo santo and sweet orange). The company also offers an online support community. Each blend is available in a mist, roll-on, or pure essential oil from \$23 to \$38 at 305-454-2725 or www.soulfulnessence.com.





The Heart Has

No Wrinkles

Caring for Our Elders

Through Bodywork

When I arrived for our massage session, my client Mary's eyes were devoid of awareness, as if she were there only in body. Mary is an Alzheimer's patient at a special memory-care facility in Westminster, Colorado. She barely speaks, and when she does, her words cannot be understood. When I first began volunteering massage services to seniors years ago, I was nervous around clients like Mary, because communication is so important to the therapist-client relationship. In a case like Mary's, however, communication is challenging and requires an approach beyond words.

It didn't take long to realize that touch was the medium. In fact, it only took 60 seconds of massage to awaken her.

"Hi, Mary," I said. "I'm Cindy. Would you like your hands massaged today?" My question didn't register as she stared at the floor. I reached out slowly and held one of her hands so she could feel some comfort and caring. After a moment, I gently applied cream to her hand and began massaging. A minute later, she suddenly sat straight up in her wheelchair, eyes wide and bright, and said as clear as day, "That feels good!" Then, she shortly fell back into a daze. It was but a moment, but there was no doubt that Mary had briefly broken through the clutches of her Alzheimer's disease. Oh, the power of touch!

Mary might be your mom, grandma, or great-grandma, and she is part of a growing population of seniors who can greatly benefit from massage. Naturally, the therapeutic focus changes with seniors in terms of hands-on work, because healing is no longer the goal. Rather, providing comfort and loving touch is what we strive for and what we know can make a significant difference with these elderly clients.

WHAT DOES TOUCH DO FOR THE ELDERLY?

For elderly clients, touch can awaken, comfort, and soothe. It improves blood circulation, which is essential for inactive individuals. It can improve balance and coordination with increased body awareness, helping your loved one's ability to avoid falls and injuries, and it can improve joint mobility and ease the pain of arthritis; whenever pain is reduced,



.....

Studies have shown that even a brief massage can produce a relaxation response in older adults living with dementia.

www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21131675



The population of US citizens over age 65 is projected to increase from 14.5 percent in 2014 to 21.7 percent by 2040, according to the US Department of Health and Human Services Administration on Aging.

www.aoa.acl.gov/Aging_Statistics/index.aspx

feelings of sadness and depression are naturally reduced as well. Massage also works directly with the nervous system in many ways, bringing a greater sense of peace and ease. And simply being in the company of someone who wants to offer loving touch adds icing to the cake.

HOW DO YOU FIND THE RIGHT PRACTITIONER?

While in some care facilities there is no specific training required to offer geriatric massage aside from being a licensed massage therapist, it is best to ask the practitioner if they have been specifically trained in working with the elderly. There are varying levels of care needed within this population.

For some residents, they might be able to receive a table massage in their room, and there would be no additional training necessary for the practitioner. But, with more fragile conditions and older, inactive residents, more careful touch needs to be applied and creative positioning utilized (e.g., offering massage while the client is in a wheelchair or even a hospital bed). It's important to find a practitioner who meets your loved one's individual needs. There are many trainings available, including Comfort Touch (www.comforttouch.com) and Daybreak Geriatric Massage Institute (www.daybreak-massage.com).

The most valuable way to know if you have found the right practitioner is how receptive your loved one is to them. If the massage feels good, and your loved one enjoys the company, you've hit the mark.

ARE THERE RISKS?

According to Sharon Puszko, owner of Daybreak Geriatric Massage Institute in Indianapolis, Indiana, and a 37-year veteran to the massage and wellness field, "There are very few true contraindications to senior massage. In actuality, it is more a matter of appropriate touch. Massage does not always have to be therapeutic; it can also simply be tender, loving care." Because massage can be applied in so many different ways, at different depths and paces, as well as to only specific parts of the body, adapting to the individual makes massage safe in most cases.


Typically, sessions are short, approximately 20–30 minutes, to avoid overstimulating the individual's nervous system. Deep work is rarely applied unless the individual is robust and somewhat fit.

As with any massage session, every client is different. Seniors need extra care, especially given that many suffer from multiple conditions and take various medications to manage those conditions. Therefore, the practitioner must be informed of all medications, sensitivities, and cautions before engaging in a massage session with this client. In a best-case scenario, the practitioner will speak directly to the individual's health-care provider to ensure all contraindications are ruled out or managed appropriately.

The most common conditions to avoid, or take caution with when massaging seniors, include bedsores if a patient is bedridden, easy bruising, heart problems, osteoporosis, thin/sensitive skin, and thrombosis (blood clot). Otherwise, the same systemic and local contraindications apply as with any massage session—not massaging anyone with a contagious skin condition, dangerously high blood pressure, fever, or open sore or wound.

MAKE THE INVESTMENT

I'm guessing you want to feel as good as you can during the final phase of your life. So does your loved one. I see seniors who say they don't want to be involved in planned facility activities, and commonly it's because they simply don't feel good. Once they start to feel better, in many cases, they become more engaged. And massage can often help them feel better. I've rarely met a senior who said no to massage; every time I've given massage to a willing resident, they have smiled, shown happiness, and, if they were capable, told me they felt much better. It's a gift to be of service in this way.

Check with the activity director at the senior care facility where your loved one resides to find out if massage therapy is already offered. If it's not offered by a staff member, the facility might have a list of referrals. You can also check your local area for a geriatric massage practitioner at www.massagetherapy.com. It's up to you and me to shed the light of awareness on how helpful massage can be. Let's take care of our elders. 

I've rarely met a senior who said no to massage; every time I've given massage to a willing resident, they have smiled, shown happiness, and, if they were capable, told me they felt much better. ””



Cindy Williams has served the massage profession as a practitioner, school administrator, instructor, curriculum developer, and mentor since 2000. She enjoys the challenge of blending structure with creative flow to provide balance in her classroom, bodywork practice, and life.

ASK THE EXPERTS

Q&A

“How is the lotion my massage therapist uses different than the everyday lotion I use at home?”

Believe it or not, therapists put a lot of thought into the lubricant they use. There are many choices—cream, gel, lotion, and oil—and each offers different degrees of glide on the skin, viscosity (thickness), and absorption into the skin. These factors affect the deliverability and quality of the strokes and techniques therapists use, so they will carefully choose a product that facilitates and enhances the specific type of work they do. Your health is an important factor, too: please let your practitioner know if you are allergic to any chemicals, nuts, or scents so they're sure to use a lubricant that does not contain these ingredients.



Kristin Coverly, LMT, is a massage therapist and educator for Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals.



“Can certain foods actually cause acne?”

You betcha! The foods we eat can play a large role in achieving a gorgeous, unblemished complexion—or not. Take for example tomatoes: while this food might be a powerhouse for your body nutrient-wise, acne sufferers will point to this food as a culprit for breakouts. The reasoning for this is greatly debated. Perhaps it's because of the tomato's high acid content or the fact that they are a member of the nightshade family (a group of edible and nonedible plants that contain solanine, which is a glycoalkaloid poison). Regardless, if you notice small bumps around your mouth after ingestion, you might want to avoid them in the future. Some other advice: decrease your intake of fried and processed foods, and keep sugar to a minimum.



Alex Caspero is a St. Louis-based registered dietitian. Her blog, [Delish Knowledge \(www.delishknowledge.com\)](http://www.delishknowledge.com), focuses on simple, healthy recipes.

Farting, Burping, and Other Bodily Noises

Relax—Your Body's Just Doing Its Job!

By Allissa Haines

It's remarkable that a single noise can reduce a 9-year-old to uncontrollable giggles, but that same noise will make an adult cringe and want to hide underneath the table.

That's how it is with the weird and wacky noises our bodies make. Burping, farting, snoring, and even some sneezes are concurrently hilarious and mortifying.

It's easier to avoid embarrassment when these things happen in our private lives. Retreat to a restroom, close the office door, or just let it rip at home, where any number of noises can be blamed on the dog.

It's not so easy to avoid those noises on a massage table. It's just you, some mellow music, and your massage therapist. But to massage therapists like me, those physical sounds of relaxation are music to our ears.

Snoring, Sawing Wood, Sleepy Snorting


In a relaxation massage, snoring can be a compliment! When you relax enough to drift off to sleep, that means your therapist is doing a great job. Most massage clients snore at one time or another, or at least get a good nose whistle happening. Light snoring and the occasional snort or sniffle is very common and not a big deal.

Gurgling, Burping, Borborygmus (that's the technical term for all those wacky abdominal noises)

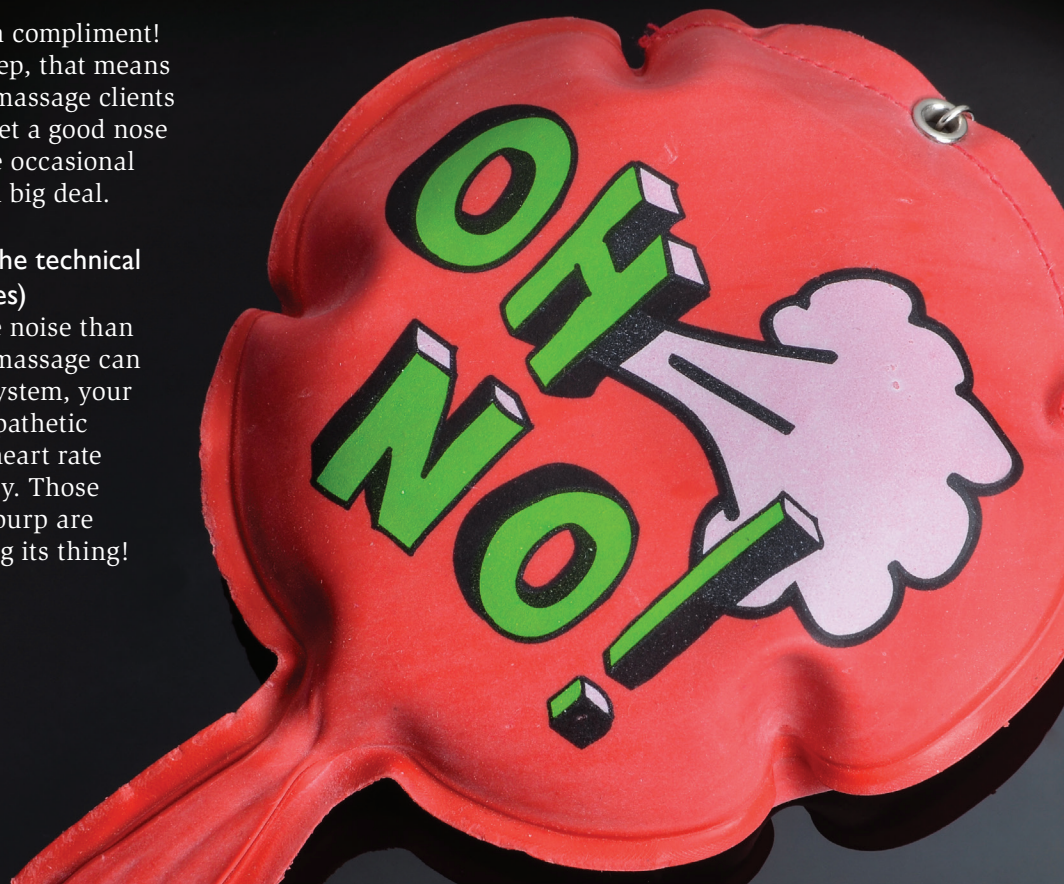
You may find that your belly makes more noise than usual during a massage. That's because massage can stimulate the parasympathetic nervous system, your "rest and digest" response. The parasympathetic system conserves energy as it slows the heart rate and increases intestinal and gland activity. Those gurgles and rumbles and the occasional burp are signs that your body is relaxing and doing its thing!

Break Wind, Fart, Toot

Whatever you call it, it happens. To everyone. Gas is a product of digestion, and the average person will pass gas 8–20 times per day. If you're in a standing or upright sitting position all day and then you lie down on a massage table, gas may move around. The parasympathetic nervous system may also relax sphincter muscles in the gastrointestinal tract, so gas may move a little easier. Again, that's your body doing exactly what it's supposed to do.

Your massage therapist won't be bothered if you pass gas on the massage table. We don't mind if you snore or sniffle or your belly growls like a bear. We're happy your body is working well, and we want you to unwind and enjoy your massage. Zzzzzz. 

Allissa Haines is a massage therapist with a private practice in Massachusetts. She also creates marketing resources for massage therapists at www.massagebusinessblueprint.com.



What is Fascia?

The Miracle Beneath Our Skin

By Karrie Osborn

When we think of what lies underneath our skin, words like *epidermis* and *dermis*, *muscle* and *bone*, and *blood vessels* and *nerves* all come to mind. But what also lies beneath the skin—working small little miracles every second—is something called *fascia*.


Ever heard of it? Your massage or bodywork therapist may have used this word during your sessions, but what is it exactly?

FASCIA EXPLAINED

In the simplest of terms, fascia is the stringy, fluid, gelatinous tissue that fills all the empty spaces between our cells. Its weblike nature envelops muscles and muscle fibers, and protectively surrounds internal organs from head to toe.

That massage you just received was hard at work nurturing and soothing all those connections within the body.





Fascia, also known as connective tissue, provides the structural and mechanical framework of the body, allowing tissues to slide and glide against each other during movement. Some say fascia literally holds the body together.

To help you better imagine this tissue, think back to the last time you cleaned and skinned a chicken breast before putting it in the frying pan. During that process, you likely saw the bird's fascia clinging to the skin as you pulled it away from the muscle beneath.

Dr. Jean-Claude Guimberteau, a French surgeon and pioneer in tendon repair, decided to look closer at fascia in the living human body. What he found and documented while working on surgical patients over the last 20 years is nothing short of amazing. His photographs, shot with a video-endoscope and extreme magnification, tell a story of tissue interconnectedness and continuity within the human body that anatomists never fully realized before.

What Guimberteau also found is that “the effect of manual therapy is mechanically observable, indubitable, and undeniable” on both the fascia and on cells' shape and mobility. Which means what? That massage you just received was hard at work nurturing and soothing all those connections within the body,


even at great distances from the original site of touch, and with profound effects we're not even fully aware of yet.

A NEW FRONTIER

With the work of Guimberteau and others, fascia is being talked about a lot these days as researchers begin to understand the enormity of its presence within the human body. In fact, as this body of inquiry grows, it's certain that fascia's many secrets will start to unfold, including its role in discovering new pathways to injury recovery, pain relief, and functional movement.

It wasn't that long ago that fascia was seen as unimportant, often cut away, tossed out, and forgotten by anatomists during dissections and research. Some liken today's new understanding of fascia as the precipice to something even bigger.

“Our understanding of the body is about to go through a radical shift,” says integrative bodywork educator and author Thomas Myers. “Everything we ‘know’ about how our mechanics work—that we have 600 muscles that work via tendons over separate ligaments that limit joint movement—has been a good model, but it is inadequate. In fact, these are all elements of one integrated

system—the fascial system.” Myers says with this new knowledge of fascia, and the body of research that is inevitably underway as a result, today's children will grow to understand the mechanics of the body and its movement in a totally different way from how we learned it. 

Karrie Osborn is senior editor at Body Sense.

For more on fascia, read this series of articles:

www.messageandbodyworkdigital.com/i/720675-september-october-2016/52

www.messageandbodyworkdigital.com/i/720675-september-october-2016/56

www.messageandbodyworkdigital.com/i/720675-september-october-2016/66

Cupping Explained

By Gregory Gorey



Traditional glass cups (left) resulted in the bruises on several Olympic athletes. Soma cups (right) are soft silicone massage cups that apply the same negative pressure with a different intent than that found in traditional Chinese medicine.

The photos of Michael Phelps at the Rio Olympic games and his mysterious circular bruises caused a huge spike in interest about a therapy called cupping. But what exactly is this mysterious bodywork technique?

Cupping is a tool dating back several thousand years where suction is applied to the skin (applying negative pressure) using a variety of methods. This suction increases the amount of blood and fluids being pulled into the area. The circular marks are a result of microtrauma to capillaries. These small traumas stimulate the body to repair the damaged cells and make stronger capillaries, much like working out at the gym does for muscles. The postworkout muscle

soreness is caused by damage to muscle fibers (not lactic acid) and the body responds to the trauma by building more and stronger muscle tissue.

Cupping is perhaps best well known in the field of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM). In TCM, the practitioner is trying to stimulate stuck *qi* (or life force). They intentionally cause those marks to move what they believe to be “stagnant blood,” which is ironic since the marks are literally causing stagnant blood to leak into tissue. Another type of cupping using glass cups resulted in the bruises on several Olympic athletes.


Cupping expert and massage researcher Samuel Wong says, “While research has yet to conclusively support the practice, therapists who use it say this age-old modality decreases muscle pain, improves lymph flow, and can even reduce cellulite.”

Another style of cupping that is gaining popularity is Soma Cupping—a system I developed. Soma Cupping

uses soft silicone massage cups to apply the same negative pressure with a different intent than TCM. With

Soma Cupping, we are trying to bathe the muscles and tissue with fluids,

but not necessarily cause discoloration or bruises (though occasionally marks can form). Stubborn trigger points (tender spots) can be relieved by placing a massage cup on irritated muscles for just a few seconds; massage cups can also be used for structural alignment work an advanced practitioner.

Whether your practitioner uses glass or silicone cups, it’s important that they are educated in, and comfortable delivering, the work. It’s a very powerful and affordable modality that can be effective for a wide range of conditions. 

Gregory Gorey is a licensed massage therapist since 1995, published author, and creator of Soma Cupping. In 2012, he began creating free massage tutorials on YouTube that have generated more than 60 million views.



Lavender Essence Aromatherapy May Be an Option for Labor Pain Management

A study exploring the impact of aromatherapy with lavender essence on labor pain severity and duration of labor affirmed the therapeutic analgesic efficacy of lavender essence aromatherapy for women in labor. Published in *Complementary Therapies in Clinical Practice*, this single-blind, randomized clinical trial was conducted on 120 pregnant women in two groups. The experimental group received two drops of lavender essence inhaled at three stages (4–5, 6–7, 8–9 centimeters cervical dilation), and severity of the labor pain and duration of labor was measured before and after intervention. The control group was treated with distilled water as a placebo in a similar way.

The results showed that the difference in the labor pain before and after intervention in the two groups was significant. But there was no difference in average duration of the active phase and the second stage of labor between the two groups.

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