



Hot Stone Massage

What is Hot Stone Massage?

It is considered a specialty form of bodywork that utilizes heated palm sized stones to aid in therapeutic massage. The stones used are typically basalt, which are dark-colored, fine-grained igneous rocks that are comprised of a variety of minerals including iron. Basalt stones hold hot temperatures for long durations due to their iron content. They are usually found in rivers or beaches and are naturally polished over time from flowing water. For these two reasons, basalt stones are ideal for therapeutic massage. The stones are heated to a comfortable temperature on a flat griddle or electrically heated in water. Once heated a massage therapist uses them to massage the body.

What are the benefits of Hot Stone Massage?

The heat from the stones penetrates deeper tissues of the body allowing the massage to be more effective for relaxing stiff achy muscles. Heat also helps improve circulation, which increases oxygen and nutrients to the body tissues and also helps aid in the removal of toxins as well. The warming effect on your body aids and soothes the mind of stress and tension. This can help lessen anxiety, fatigue & depression while improving more restful sleep. Hot stone massage promotes many of the same benefits you would find from a Swedish massage. These include pain management, increased range of motion, strengthened immunity system, reduces spasms & cramps, reduces post surgery adhesions, scarring & swelling, helps relieve migraine pain, promotes tissue regeneration and much more.

What should I expect from a Hot Stone Massage

A typical hot stone massage will be similar to a Swedish massage but have the added benefits of using heated stones. The massage therapist will use a combination of stones, hands, forearms, and elbows throughout the session. The stones provide a useful tool for the therapist who can utilize different shapes and sizes for different effects. Each stone offers its own unique features to glide through tissue, knead away tension or break down trigger points. The therapist will rotate warmer stones throughout the session as your body absorbs the heat and the stones cool down. Hot stone massages are usually 50 to 90 minutes in length and range anywhere from \$50 USD to \$280 USD in price.

When should I NOT receive a Hot Stone Massage?

When receiving treatments utilizing heat, it's best practice to keep open communication with your therapist about the temperature. Don't ever "tough it out", if the stone feels too hot the therapist can adjust the temperature, pressure and how fast they move the stone to lighten heat's effect on the body. As with all types of bodywork there are times where hot stone massage is contraindicated. It's always a good idea to consult your doctor before getting a massage, especially after recent surgeries, during pregnancy, infectious skin conditions, heart disease, neuropathy, epilepsy, autoimmune dysfunctions, cancer, fever, blood clots, rheumatoid arthritis and diabetes.

Sources:

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