
PRACTITIONER BENEFITS

TYM is energy efficient and very easy on the practitioner; it focuses as much on the well-being of the therapist as of the client.

Because the session is performed on the mat alongside the client, ergonomics and biomechanics are enhanced, making this work extremely efficient. Very little energy and force is subsequently needed to perform stretches or manipulations.

At a minimum, providers should have intensive training, and certification or licensure in disciplines such as massage or physical therapy, yoga, or personal training as well as additional certification in TYM.

TESTIMONIAL

“An elderly client of mine once told me that the Thai work is what physical therapy was meant to be. His body had contracted with a long term illness, and he found great relief from the gentle compressions and openings of Traditional Thai Massage. He joins the ranks of so many clients who have experienced therapeutic benefit for shoulder issues, sciatic pain, back pain and variety of other ailments.”

-Lyrea Crawford,
Thai massage therapist and educator

RESOURCES

Lotus Palm School of Thai Yoga Massage

www.lotuspalm.com

Tridosha Self Test

www.tridosha.com/self-test

Traditional Thai Yoga Massage and Ayurvedic Bodywork — The Sunshine Network

www.thaiyogamassage.infothai.com

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Yahara Therapy

Thai Yoga Massage



An Introduction for Manual
Therapists and Other Health Care
Practitioners

Traditional Thai Yoga Massage



HISTORY

Thai Yoga Massage (TYM — also known as *Traditional Thai Massage* or *Nuad Boran*) is a therapeutic bodywork practice rooted in the Indian Ayurvedic traditions of yoga and massage. TYM is part of Thai traditional medicine, which addresses physical health in the context of Thai culture and Buddhist spiritual principles. TYM is an integrated part of a whole-life approach to wellness and health.^{1,3,4}

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CLIENT BENEFITS

Therapeutic and Diagnostic Stretching, joint play, soft-tissue manipulation and relaxation, postural education, and balance of autonomic function are important components of this practice. Constant comparison between sides of the body during treatment is diagnostically useful; the client is also keenly body aware.

Adaptable, Integratable Many postures and exercises of TYM can be integrated into other forms of therapy, and are easily adapted to tables, chairs and other surfaces. Techniques can be modified to accommodate various situations, such as pregnancy or injury.

TYM is practiced with respect for all precautions and contraindications. All ages may benefit. Thai massage is as effective as other bodywork modalities at treating multiple conditions, as well as side-effects of treatments such as chemotherapy. Indications for TYM include general well-being, range of motion (ROM) limitations, and relief from musculoskeletal pain.^{2,5,7}

APPROACH AND METHODS

Performed on a mat, with the client fully clothed, the practitioner uses arms, legs, feet and hands to massage and gently stretch the body along energy lines and centers, *sen* and *marmas*, respectively. Sen lines closely mirror Chinese meridians; they also closely follow myofascial meridians treated in bodywork, yoga, and PNF patterning.⁶ The intent is to balance the *tridosha*, or the combined three vital elements comprising life. Balance means optimal health. Harmony of the *tridosha* depends upon one's intrinsic biology as well as current life choices, health conditions, and activities.

TYM is performed after a thorough health intake which often includes questions to determine Ayurvedic constitution. The practitioner can then assess which postures and treatments will be most beneficial for that person in that moment.

TYM is traditionally very vigorous; however, especially for “Western” bodies, it is often adjusted to be gentler, and to adapt to precautions and contraindications. Sessions last from 90 minutes to several hours. Treatments are whole-body in focus, even if the client presents with a localized complaint. Balance and flow are emphasized.

Metta, the philosophy of *loving-kindness*, is central to every session.



With many therapy interventions, clients can report feeling exhausted, bogged-down, ungrounded or sore. With its emphasis on equilibrium, TYM usually leaves the client relaxed and simultaneously invigorated and awake, yet centered. Treatment combines palm and thumb compressions along *sen* and *marmas*. Compressions are rhythmic in nature, engaging parasympathetic tone. Emphasis on breathwork is integral to this practice. The practitioner remains aware of the client's breathing, encouraging full, rhythmic breaths with each physical compression. As well, the practitioner attempts to synchronize their own breath with the client's.