



How To Find A Massage Therapist Who Can Help You

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How To Find A Massage Therapist Who Can Help You

Introduction

Knots are symptoms. Most symptoms are caused by your muscles and other soft tissues (not bones.) The most logical person to help you is a massage therapist *but* there are many types of massage therapists.

Everyone has different training, a different personality, and the filters that the training passes through are not the same, either. Some massage schools teach primarily relaxation type massage and some focus on medical or rehabilitative treatment. There are all kinds of variations of training and there are many named techniques which overlap or vary greatly due to the instructor.

There are also many types of post-massage school training. Some are very specific for pain syndromes and some are feel-good.

There are therapists who believe that if they cannot help you with the education or experiences or skill level they have, that it was “not to be.” I suppose this is easier than considering that you simply might not have sufficient training or experience to be effective at pain relief.

You, Dear Reader, really must educate yourself about carpal tunnel syndrome and massage and how to find a massage professional who can help you. Knowing all of these things will help you find the best therapist for you and will give you the best chance to regain pain-free use of your hand and wrist *and body*.

All properly done massage has benefits but **not** all massage will help you relieve your symptoms—your knots.

The following compilation of articles will help you find the massage therapist who will work well with you and for you. If the first therapist doesn't meet your needs, please don't hesitate to look for someone else. This happens all the time and massage therapists understand.

How is Massage Therapy Different from Physical Therapy?

Therapeutic massage is a process of manipulating (moving) the soft tissues (not bones) of a body. There are many different ways to manipulate muscles and soft tissues manually (by hand.)

A massage therapist will strive to help you feel better by releasing areas of tightness and helping normalize your tissues. Some may use ice or heat or even a vibrating device or thumb-saving “tool” but most of the treatment is done by hand. Sometimes elbows and the lower part of the arm are also used as tools.

A professional massage practitioner has gone to a school that specializes in massage technique. Programs range up to 1,000 or more hours. Of course, as a rule, the more the better.

Massage sessions generally last from 30-60 minutes and are administered while you are on a comfortably padded table. Massage is generally given directly on your skin but you will be modestly draped.

Professional massage therapists follow a code of ethics prescribed by their professional association or certifying agency. You may find them in chiropractors’ offices, spas, private massage clinics or offices, beauty salons, working out of their homes. Some will come to your home with their equipment.

A physical therapist has a degree in physical therapy, often a Masters Degree. Their job is to help you regain function and reduce pain. However, very few physical therapists use manual therapies (although I have met a few who do.)

More often, a physical therapist relies on therapeutic “modalities” such as ice, heat, hydrotherapy (water,) electrical stimulation, and ultrasound. Generally, a PT will show you how to do therapeutic movements but will not have the time to monitor you. That means you have to do the movements yourself. While they have a lot of training, very little is in massage.

Some physical therapy clinics or MD offices have massage therapists on staff. However, there may be limits on the type of massage, area of the body, or the time allowed for treatment. Many times medical treatment is limited by what insurers allow and by what other services are being provided.

If you are hoping that your health insurance will cover your rehabilitation, chances are usually best if you go to a conventional physical therapy facility. Most of the time, massage therapy is paid out of your pocket.

But, money should not be your only concern. The value or benefit you receive is what counts.

How Does Massage Help?

Poor posture can cause muscle knots by creating pressure on the nerves, muscles and blood vessels in and around your shoulder area. If your posture is "poor" (collapsing forward) the following bodywork people can help: Neuromuscular massage therapists (if they assess your posture and develop a strategy to normalize it) and Rolfers (Rolfing is a form of bodywork designed to correct posture.)

You may also get great help from other massage therapists as long as they understand the natural laws of the body and the causes of your pain.

Massage warms your tissues. It normalizes them: short, tight muscles and soft tissues can be lengthened. Overstretched muscles can get their spasms released. Lymph fluids get flushed through your tissues. Trigger points can be eliminated. Posture can be improved.

Massage has many more benefits and I must admit to you: I am flat-out biased about the value of massage. I believe it's the best "medicine" in the world and is hugely under-rated by the medical community. It's also the oldest medicine.

Therapeutic massage even improves your immune system function. This has been proven by reading the chemical markers in the blood of study subjects.

You are the "contractor" for your body and the people who help you are your "subcontractors." You have to be in charge of the job in order to get better.

"And You Deserve to Feel Better!"

But Can Massage Help Muscle Knots?

There is absolutely no doubt in my mind that therapeutic massage can be a great help in relieving the pain *and* the causes of knots in your back.

Sometimes, massage along with a few changes in position, posture and habits are all you will need to get rid of your back discomfort.

Now, I have been a neuromuscular massage therapist for many years, and I will admit: I am highly biased in the value of massage.

Massage is old medicine. Massage is used in other "less civilized" countries as medicine, because that is what it is.

Massage is medicine.

It is all natural and needs no other tools than the two hands, arms and elbows that almost all of us have.

How does massage help get rid of knots in your back?

Massage warms and normalizes your muscles and soft tissues. It relaxes tight, sore muscles.

You developed knots because you were using some of your muscles more than others. And, there were some muscles that you used very little, if at all. This caused muscle imbalance. Muscle imbalances cause pain.

Some of your muscles became "too tight" and some were underused. To call your attention to their plight, they caused numbness, pain or tingling in your back. That means they are asking for help.

You can do your own massage or go to a professional massage therapist.

Therapeutic massage is a great way to help your muscles return to the neutral, balanced condition they used to be in.

Massage is an all-natural, good for your whole body way to get rid of the knots in your back. (I did tell you I'm biased, right?)

How to Know Whether Your Muscles Are Causing Your Muscle Knots

You probably know I'm always telling you that your muscles are a prime cause of the discomfort or pain anywhere in your body.

Here's how to tell if muscles are causing your knots.

Feel them. (Pretty tricky, huh?)

Don't feel just the little muscles right on your knot. Feel **all** the muscles up and down your back, your chest, your ribs, your arm, and even your neck.

Lots of us grew up thinking that, for some reason, it wasn't good to touch, feel or pet ourselves. Or, maybe we just never did it. Who knows why?

But, touch is very important. Babies won't thrive without touch. It's perfectly fine to touch and be touched, in appropriate ways.

And, our skin has receptors so we can feel heat, cold and pressure. This is good. Keeps us safe.

Muscles that attach to your arms, your neck, ribs, shoulder, waist, chest and back, can cause knots in your back. Sometimes you will also have pain elsewhere.

Place one hand on your other arm. Feel that arm. *Really* FEEL it.

What does it feel like? Move your hand from your wrist to your elbow. Press gently, so you can feel below your skin.

Those are muscles, below the skin.

Do they feel bunched? Hard? Painful? It's easier to feel your own arm than your own back. That's why you are doing this exercise on your arm.

If your muscles feel tender, stringy, bunched or hard instead of soft and pliable, then your muscles are involved in your pain. Your back muscles would feel much the same if you could press on them.

Today, I want you to be kind to yourself and to your muscles.

Either make an appointment for a therapeutic massage so you can become familiar with your muscles or have a do-it-yourself massage at home.

"Because You Deserve to Feel Better!"

When Knots Won't Go Away, Check Trigger Points In Muscles

Knots are very often caused by trigger points in your muscles.

What ARE trigger points? Trigger points are hyperirritable (crabby) areas of muscle. Trigger points can also be found in other soft tissues. Soft tissues are everything except bone.

What do trigger points do? They cause pain and symptoms in other parts of the body, sometimes at a far distance from the trigger point. This is called "referred" pain.

What CAUSES trigger points? There are some nutritional related causes, but the most common cause is muscle overload.

Who gets trigger points? We ALL have the potential to have them, because we all have soft tissues.

When a nagging pain or symptom won't go away with treatment, that most likely means a trigger point is causing the pain and needs to be released.

Here's a list of some more causes of trigger points:

- abnormal bone structure that you may have been born with (a leg or arm length difference or short upper arms)
- posture that causes muscle stress (this is a **very** common cause)
- doing repetitive motions, especially doing them incorrectly
- vitamin & mineral deficiencies or incorrect levels of needed nutrients
- thyroid or certain blood disorders
- stress, allergies and chronic infections.

How are trigger points treated? A manual or massage therapist can release trigger points by locating them, pressing into them AND releasing the surrounding muscles that caused them in the first place.

You have the **videos in this program** to show you where your trigger points are, where they cause pain and where to press to get rid of them. That should be all you need.

There is also a very good self-help book that will show you *exactly* where you should press to relieve your trigger points. You can find it on the right hand side at <http://CarpalTunnelPainRelief.com> It's the blue book. Just click on the blue book for more info. You will love it! It will help you release many of your own trigger points.

Also, there are charts that show trigger points and the areas they distribute pain to. A good manual therapist or massage therapist will know by your symptoms where your trigger points are and will be able to release them. A good therapist will also help you get rid of the *cause* of the trigger points.

No more trigger points equals no more knots!

Trigger Points and Knots

What are trigger points and how do they cause knots?

Conventional allopathic medicine (that means your medical doctor) sometimes recognizes trigger points. Some doctors do truly understand trigger points--what they are, how they work--but others think that every tender place is a trigger point. That's not true.

There is an excellent 2-volume set of Trigger Point Manuals written by medical doctors for the medical profession. If you enjoy reading and want to discover the trigger points and other causes of your pain and how to get rid of them, or to

share this information with your massage therapist, this is a really great resource. It's one of my favorite reads.

When doctors treat trigger points, it is usually with injections (which may or may not work) or by stretching.

Trigger points are caused by *something*. The "something" must be taken care of first before the trigger point can go away.

Manual therapy--pressing into the trigger point AND releasing the muscles that *caused* it--is usually very successful. It takes time and that's why there are muscle specialists (certain massage or manual therapists) who do this work. Conventional medical practitioners generally don't have the time or training to release trigger points.

There are several areas that can have trigger points that cause knots: your neck (scalene muscles), chest (pectoral muscles), ribs, back, and muscles in your upper arm and lower arm.

The problem with a lot of conventional medicine is that it overlooks the most basic cause of most of our pain: Our muscles! As technology overtook natural medical treatments, muscles were kind of thrown by the wayside as being causes of pain.

There are countries in the world where massage and manual therapies are part of their medical treatment because massage is OLD medicine!

Trigger points can cause knots in your back, as well as other pain in your body. The beauty of it is, *trigger points can be released*. When you release trigger points, the symptoms they cause will go away, too.

What Causes Muscle Spasms In Your Back?

Muscle spasms (knots) always have a cause. And, they almost always has a natural cure.

Short muscles can cause knots and stretching the short muscles can help.

Every part of your body is attached to every other part. Your hand and wrist is directly attached to your back and leg. Your body is one unit and when any one part gets unhappy (even if it does not seem to complain) it causes pain or symptoms somewhere else.

Typically, the muscles in the fronts of our bodies get short. This happens due to work, habits and life. It also happens when our back muscles become weak. Stretching the front of your body, like a dog or cat or baby does, will help you get your muscles back to the length they used to be.

A massage therapist can help release, or relax, the tight muscles in front of your body to help normalize your posture. Stretching those same muscles can help and some massage therapists can help with stretches, too.

Weak back muscles also cause knots and strengthening can help.

Strengthening your back muscles will also help with muscular balance. When your muscles are happily balanced, your knots will go away. In fact, your whole body will feel better! Discover how to get a strong back simply and easily at [Simple Strengthening](#).

There are lots of potential triggers for knots.

You will have to determine what is causing your symptoms. Sometimes you have to be your own doctor. I have given you a lot of information in this program to help you figure out what is causing your knots so you can get rid of them.

You must take care of the only body you will ever have in this lifetime. Doctors haven't perfected whole body replacements yet.

Here are some easy ways to improve your posture:

- Lift the crown of your head
- Lift your breastbone and
- Suck your abdomen back to your spine.

Better posture helps relieve back pain symptoms like knots and other aches and pains, too.

If you'd like more suggestions on positioning yourself correctly, check out [Pain Relief Ergonomics](#). They'll help you work in comfort at your desk or workstation.

As you start to knock out the causes of your symptoms, you will have relief from your knots.

Does Massage Hurt?

There is always a cause, or reason, when you get pain. Sometimes the reason is easy to figure out. In the field of massage, there are many professionals who have an excellent understanding of the causes of knots in your back.

Those causes almost *a/ways* involve muscles. Your muscles.

You most likely developed your knots or muscle spasms, or similar discomfort, because some of your muscles were being used more than others. Some muscles became tighter than they were designed to be and some became weaker than they were designed to be.

Therapeutic massage helps normalize those too tight muscles and soft tissues.

Massage gets the body fluids moving through your tissues and helps flush out metabolic wastes (anything that would usually pass through our body normally.)

When muscles are "stuck," the metabolic wastes don't move much either. Massage helps them get a move on.

Here is how massage might "hurt" when you have muscle spasms.

When muscles and tissues are in contraction (tight) it can be uncomfortable to have someone pressing on them, or into them. Unfortunately, if your massage is so light that it doesn't cause any discomfort at all, you will have very little benefit from it.

A certain amount of pressure is required in order to get deep enough into your soft tissues to soften them and normalize them.

Pressing on the skin without causing pressure in the muscles, tendons and ligaments below the skin won't give you relief.

Not all massage therapists know what to do about knots in your back—they might work on the painful area rather than the caus-- so it's a good idea to interview the therapists you are considering. Go to the next article to find out what to ask before you schedule your massage appointment.

Also, most massage therapists understand that it is your body, and you get to let them know whether the pressure they use is okay with you or too much. Don't be shy--this is your body and you are in control of your massage. They will try to work within your pain tolerance level.

So, yes, massage can be uncomfortable when your muscles are tight. But, often people say, "Ahhh, That's Good Pain!"

What they mean is, "Yes, it does hurt, but it feels *just* like what my body needed. *Don't stop!*"

If the pressure or discomfort you feel when you having a massage feels inappropriate or aggravating, rather than simply painful or uncomfortable, that could be a sign that the massage therapist is working on an area that **cannot** release.

Some muscles can't release until the muscles that are causing them to be "tight" are treated and released first.

Since it's your body and your massage you always to control the depth of pressure. Don't be shy, simply ask your massage therapist to: "Lighten Up!"

And, if the pressure isn't enough, ask for more pressure. It's okay!

How to Interview a Massage Therapist for Knots in Your Back

If you have muscle spasms in your back, maybe you have already seen a massage therapist. Perhaps it helped you get rid of your knots and perhaps it didn't. (That's probably why you are here.)

If your massage did not help much, you will learn a lot from this article about selecting a massage therapist who can make a difference with your knots.

If you haven't tried massage yet, this article will help you select the best massage therapist in your area for your situation.

Can massage therapy help get rid of knots? Absolutely, yes! (Am I biased or what?)

If a massage professional has a good working knowledge of **what** causes knots in your muscles, he or she can make a world of difference to you!

Doctors often have no clue about the cause of muscle knots. Most of them didn't learn much about muscles when they were in school (but, hey! neither did we) and so when they see a patient who has complaints of knots in his or her back the doctor will often think, "I don't know what to do so I will prescribe a muscle relaxant and anti-inflammatory medicine and maybe heat or ice."

It's possible that you have muscle strain or trigger points elsewhere that are causing your pain. Muscles are the PRIMARY cause of knots in your muscles.

So, yes, therapeutic massage can definitely help eliminate or reduce your knots.

Many massage therapists treat knot sufferers incorrectly. This is because they don't have the training or background to understand why you have pain.

They will rub on your painful knot but you may not notice much (or any) relief. You might even feel worse!

The reason for that is they are working on the *symptoms* rather than the *cause* of your pain.

He or she is working *where it hurts*, rather than working on the areas that are actually *causing* your pain. That's a common problem with massage therapists. *Some just rub where it hurts and hope it will help.* Sometimes the cause is actually where the pain is, other times not.

Here's how to interview a massage therapist. Most will be happy to give you a free consultation.

First of all, please don't ask, "Do you work with people who have knots in their backs?" or, "Do you treat muscle spasms?" There are many massage therapists who will say yes, even though they don't have the training or experience to successfully treat your muscle spasms or knots.

Instead, ask him or her the following questions and listen closely to the answers. See whether their answers make sense to you.

- What are the most common causes of muscle knots in backs?
- How will you determine why I have pain? (It is really great if the massage therapist will actually look at you and do a visual evaluation to see if you are twisted or tilted or off-center.)
- What is your pain treatment strategy? (Will he or she look for the causes of your knots and treat the causes?)
- What type of massage training did you have?
- What muscles could be involved in my situation?
- How long do you think it will take for me to feel better?
- Will there be pain or discomfort during or after the massage?

Feel free to ask additional questions. Also, ask for clarification for any answer you did not fully understand. Does what they say sound reasonable to you based on what you now know?

You can learn a lot on the phone but you can learn even more in person. The massage therapist may actually touch your muscles as he explains and that will make it even easier for you to understand. If they sound *logical*, that's a good sign!

Sometimes when muscles are very tight, as they often are with knots, there may be some discomfort during the massage. There may also be some tenderness afterward. That is because you have some areas of tight muscles and because they are not yet used to someone pressing on them and kneading them.

If you have any discomfort during the massage, you may perceive it as "good pain," or it may be quite intense.

It is okay for you to guide your massage therapist. They want to know how you are feeling and responding. They want you to feel better. **If the pain or pressure does not feel appropriate or useful to you, say so!**

Sometimes discomfort during a therapeutic massage session is unavoidable and it's usually worse the first time than later visits.

But, the payoff from massage therapy for pain relief can be huge.

Start looking for massage therapists to interview today.

"Because You Deserve To Feel Better!"

How to Find a Massage Therapist

How can you find the massage therapist who will be best for you?

Organizations: [The American Massage Therapy Association](#) is the largest association of massage professionals and students. The AMTA has certain qualifications in order to be a member which include testing. There are other professional organizations with different criteria for membership.

National Certification: There are a couple of national certifying agencies. One is called [NCBTMB](#). These agencies grant a certificate if a therapist passes the exam. Therapists in unlicensed states can take the test voluntarily or it may be required to get a state license.

State Licensing: State licensing is currently required in about 4/5's of the states. Many states use as their examination one of the national exams. A license by a State overrides city licensing. Only legitimate massage therapists may be state licensed.

Advertising: Some massage therapists have advertising online or in the Yellow Pages. Sometimes they have a lot of information in their ads. Be careful of the category you are in. As I travel, I always check the Yellow Pages to see the ads for massage. This has sometimes been very, uhhh, educational or entertaining.

Sometimes “massage” means sexual services and you have to find the “massage therapy” category to get to a **real** therapist.

Signs: You may drive by a sign and think of going there. Interviewing the therapist will help you make your decision. Even knowing whether a state is licensed will help you make your decision.

Word of Mouth: This is the best. If you know someone who thinks the world of their therapist, and who has had a lot of benefit from them, get that name! Maybe they will not be “the one” for you, but you have a better chance with a referral.

Interviewing: It’s always okay to interview a potential massage therapist. You can discover a lot with a brief phone interview but a short in-person interview will give you the most information about a therapist including how they work, their personality, their work space, their training and what they think of your pain and how they might treat you.

Conclusion

Finding a massage therapist who can help you get rid of the knots in your back or other pain may just be the best thing you have ever done for yourself! (I did tell you that I believe a great massage is wonderful, necessary, awesome and loaded with benefits, right?) ☺

So, look into booking your massage today.

“Because You Deserve to Feel Better!”

More information at:

<http://www.CarpalTunnelPainReliefNow.com>

<http://www.SimplePainRelief.com>

<http://www.SimpleStrengthening.com>