



What to expect from your first sports massage treatment?

It's so easy to put off getting a treatment that you've never experienced before, especially when you are nervous about the 'unknowns'.

Hopefully after reading this blog, I will have addressed these 'unknowns' and you'll feel more knowledgeable and confident to book your first sports massage appointment.



Consultation

First up, the consultation! This is where the therapist builds the picture of your day to day habits, hobbies, medical history and a chance to understand the reason for you requiring a sports massage. It is really important that at this stage you discuss any past illnesses, injuries or operations. For example, ACL reconstruction. This is crucial as it may hold a key piece of information that is impacting on your current levels of comfort. It is at this point you should be asked about any allergies so the therapist can ensure they use the correct oils or lotions during

your treatment. There are some rare cases where a sports therapist may not treat you and may refer you on to a more specialised professional. This should take 5-10 minutes depending on your medical history.

Postural examination

Next up, a postural examination! This is a visual observation where the therapist is trying to find any obvious imbalances like a tilted left hips or uneven distribution of weight or muscle. The therapist may get you to walk on the spot or bend and touch your toes. These are only to see your natural posture. The examination is normally conducted with the clients wearing shorts and no t-shirt (ladies - the bra stays on). This allows the therapist to better see the client's full body posture. However, if you are not comfortable with this, let the therapist know - they wouldn't be offended.

Treatment plan

After the consultation and postural assessment, the therapist will discuss the outcomes that they have found. This could be big or small but are all certain to positively improve your situation.

The therapist will then recommend and discuss the treatment method for your specific needs.

Treatment / Sports Massage

A sports massage consists of four main stroke types which are Effleurage, Petrissage, Friction and Tapotement.

Effleurage (skimming of the skin/tissue) introduces touch to the clients and is aimed at warming up and relaxing muscles tissue.



Petrissage (kneading of the skin/tissue) starts to stretch the muscle fibres and aids the removal of any waste product.

Friction (small forceful movements) aim to separate adhesions between the fibres, breaks down the scar tissue and restores elasticity in the muscle allowing the healing process to kick in!

Tapotement (cupping or hacking) sounds painful but it really isn't! It's main effect is to stimulate the muscle which is most commonly used in preparation of performance.

Aftercare advice /Recommendation

After the treatment, the therapist should give you some aftercare advice. A few key things are:

- Drink plenty of water
- Wrap up warm
- You may feel sleepy
- Avoid sitting still within the short time after.
- You may get stiff muscle or a headache etc after treatment - these are not abnormal.

The therapist is then likely to recommend when your next treatment should be. The recommendation tends to depend on the discomfort/ injury and could range from one week time to a months time.

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