

INFORMED CONSENT, SAFETY PROTOCOLS & DISCLAIMER

CLINICAL MASSAGE THERAPY PRACTICE GUIDELINES

MEDICAL DISCLAIMER: Massage therapy is intended for stress reduction, pain management, soft tissue manipulation, and circulatory support. It is not a substitute for professional medical examinations, diagnoses, or treatments. Clients presenting with complex, acute, or chronic underlying medical issues are strictly required to consult their primary care physician to secure formal clearance prior to receiving bodywork.

Because soft tissue manipulation directly influences the circulatory, nervous, lymphatic, and musculoskeletal systems, treatment protocols must be rigidly adjusted or withheld based on specific physiological states, clinical conditions, and age groups.

1. ABSOLUTE & LOCAL CONTRAINDICATIONS

- **Fever or Systemic Infection:** Bodywork is strictly withheld during acute illness. Massage accelerates systemic fluid circulation, which overtaxes immune resources and risks spreading underlying pathogens.
- **Thromboembolic Risk (DVT):** Massage is entirely contraindicated if blood clots are suspected or present. Direct tissue manipulation can dislodge a thrombus, causing a life-threatening embolic event.
- **Uncontrolled Systemic Pathology:** This includes unmanaged cardiovascular disease, advanced renal or hepatic failure, or malignant hypertension. Fluid volume shifting induced by bodywork can overwork vulnerable organs.
- **Acute Intoxication:** Services are immediately denied if a client is under the influence of alcohol or substances that impair cognitive awareness and physical sensation, rendering pain feedback unreliable.

2. ONCOLOGY (CANCER CARE) PROTOCOLS

Massage provides profound palliative support, but standard deep tissue methodologies are adapted to protect client safety:

- **Deep Tissue Contraindication:** Deep muscle manipulation is strictly contraindicated for active oncology patients. Tumors, radiation, and metabolic changes compromise bone density and structural tissue, increasing the risks of pathological fractures, severe bruising, or localized tissue degradation.
- **Indication for Lymphatic Drainage:** Light-touch Manual Lymphatic Drainage (MLD) or ultra-gentle oncology touch is highly suggested. This non-invasive approach regulates fluid dynamics, reduces stress, and avoids disrupting fragile lymphatic pathways or taxing compromised biological structures.

3. PREGNANCY PROTOCOL

- **First Trimester Boundary (Under 12 Weeks):** Massage therapy will **not** be performed on any client who is less than 12 weeks pregnant.
- **Clinical Rationale:** The first trimester carries the highest statistical baseline risk for spontaneous miscarriage due to early embryonic development and delicate hormonal leveling. The heavy circulatory shifts, systemic detoxification response, and automatic pressure reflex zones stimulated during bodywork can place unnecessary physiological stress on a fragile early pregnancy. Services safely resume starting in the second trimester.

4. PEDIATRIC GUIDELINES & AGE RESTRICTIONS

Developing musculoskeletal systems require highly specialized boundaries and legal oversight:

- **Approved Modalities:** Children may safely receive gentle, relaxation-focused Swedish massage and light passive stretching to assist with growing pains, sleep regulation, and anxiety. A parent or legal guardian **must remain present in the treatment room** for the entire duration of the session.
- **Contraindicated Techniques:** Aggressive deep tissue work, deep joint mobilizations, or structural forces are completely contraindicated due to fragile open growth plates and incomplete bone density.
- **Cupping Age Restriction:** Cupping therapy is strictly contraindicated for children **under the age of 7**. Younger vascular structures and delicate skin layers cannot safely withstand vacuum suction. For children aged 7 and older, light stationary cupping may only proceed following an extensive therapist assessment and explicit parental consent.

5. OPERATIONAL PROTECTIONS & CLIENT AUTONOMY

- **Right to Refuse or Terminate Treatment:** The practicing therapist reserves the absolute right to refuse service or terminate an active session immediately if a client presents with undisclosed medical risks, contagious skin anomalies, signs of intoxication, or exhibits inappropriate or non-clinical behavior.
- **Client Autonomy Clause:** The client retains absolute control over their body at all times. You possess the right to modify pressure, alter physical positioning, adjust draping parameters, or halt the treatment completely at any point during the session.
- **24-Hour Cancellation Policy:** Appointments must be cancelled or rescheduled at least 24 hours prior to the scheduled session start time. Late cancellations or changes made within the 24-hour window, as well as same-day cancellations and missed appointments, will incur the full standard cancellation fee.

INFORMED CONSENT & ACKNOWLEDGMENT: By signing below, you affirm that you have thoroughly read, understood, and agreed to the medical disclaimers, contraindications, special population policies, and operational terms detailed in this form. You certify that you have disclosed your entire medical history accurately and understand that completing this form releases the therapist from liability stemming from any failure to disclose relevant health conditions.

CLIENT / LEGAL GUARDIAN SIGNATURE

DATE

THERAPIST SIGNATURE

DATE