

Neuropathy Massage Guidelines

Created 05/2018 Dr. Katie Schmitt, PT, DPT, CLT

Board Certified Clinical Specialist in Oncologic Physical Therapy

Neuropathy Foot Massage (5 Min per foot):

Sit in a comfortable position where you or your caregiver can reach the foot

- Press the thumb through the heel and massage the heel fat pad
- Work the massage through the arch of the foot up to each toe
- Spread the ball of the foot medially and laterally
- With the thumb and the pointer finger massage in between the bones of the foot on the top of the foot, looking for trigger points. If found, hold 30-90 seconds to release discomfort. Breathe out.
- Pull up and out on each toe to distract joint
- Grab the long bone of the first metatarsal and wiggle it on the second, repeat for 2-5.
- Massage up through the calf and shin in long sweeping strokes to push swelling up towards lymph nodes behind the knee
- Move the ankle in 5 clockwise circles and 5 counterclockwise circles

Neuropathy Hand Massage (5 Min per hand):

Sit in a comfortable position where you or your caregiver can reach the hand

- Massage the thumb through the fat pad of the hand
- Work the massage through the palm
- With the thumb and the pointer finger massage in between the bones of the hand, squeezing from the top and bottom of the hand looking for trigger points. If found, hold 30-90 seconds to release discomfort. There is a great one in the thumb web space. Breathe out.
- Pull up and out on each finger to distract joint
- Grab the long bone of the first metacarpal and wiggle it on the second, repeat for 2-5.
- Massage up through the wrist and forearm in long sweeping strokes
- Move the wrist in 5 clockwise circles and 5 counterclockwise circles

Rolling the feet or hands on a frozen water bottle or tennis ball is a great alternative to massage. If you cannot reach your feet, try a pencil with a good eraser to help massage the top of the foot.

Be sure to perform everything pain free and strain free.

Video: drkatiept.com

Chatchawan, U., et. al., 2015. Effects of Thai foot massage on balance performance in diabetic patients with peripheral neuropathy: a randomized parallel-controlled trial. *Med Sci Monit Basic Res* (21), 68-75. Doi: 10.12659/msmbr.894163

Vaillant, J., et. al., 2009. Massage and mobilization of the feet and ankles in elderly adults: Effect on clinical balance performance. *Manual Therapy*. (14), 661-664. Doi: 10.1016/j.math.200.03.004