

# Complementary Therapy Project

## Hot Stone Therapy

### What is Hot Stone Therapy?

A Hot Stone Massage is a variation of a typical massage, but uses smooth, water-heated basalt stones on key points around the body. This direct heat relaxes the muscles, which means that the massage itself is more effective and intense than it would otherwise be.

Hot Stone massages are deeply soothing and relaxing and act to release tight muscles. The size of the stones varies, according to which part of the body they are being used on. The stones can also be used with Essentials Oils to increase the sense of relaxation.

### What are the benefits of Hot and Cold Stone Massage?

The benefits of Hot Stone Massage include:

- Deep relaxation, both physically and mentally
- Stress is reduced, relieving mental and physical fatigue
- Circulation is improved and muscles have an increased blood supply, improving function
- Toxins and waste are eliminated more quickly
- The warmth can relieve pain in muscles and joints
- Tension in connective tissue is decreased
- The heat from the stones is transferred to the body and it may reach up to 3cm into the muscle
- There is a deep comfort of receiving warmth on the body.

### What is Hot Stone Therapy Good For?

The effect of the relaxing warmth is thought to encourage the body to detox and heal, increasing lymph flow and helping to flush out toxins. The body becomes relaxed in a much shorter space of time, and the therapist can focus on a deep working of the tissues using both stone and hand strokes.

Applying hot stones to the body increases the temperature of the skin and muscle tissue to improve circulation and calm the nervous system. As a result, Hot Stone massages are deeply relaxing and act to rebalance the body and mind. As the superficial muscles relax, the therapist can also massage the deeper muscles giving a greater sense of relief.

### What to expect from a Hot Stone Treatment:

You will be able to undress and lie face down on the massage table in private, while the therapist waits outside. When you are ready the therapist will apply oil to your body so that the hot stones can sit comfortably on or glide smoothly along your body.

The therapist will then place the warm stones on many different points around your body, including on your back, between your toes and in the palms of your hands. Feel free to say if you think the stones are too hot or too cold for you. As the stones cool, they will be replaced by fresh stones from the heater. The stones will be between 53-64 degrees Celsius.

After a time, the therapist will massage the body using either the stones or their hands. When finished on your back, the therapist will ask you to turn over and will repeat the process for the front of your body. Your treatment is likely to last about an hour.

### A Good Hot Stone Therapy should:

- Boost your circulation
- Release stored tension
- Recharge your energy levels
- Relax you
- Help with congestion

Conditions it is suited to treating include: • muscular pain • poor circulation • rheumatic and arthritic conditions • fibromyalgia • multiple sclerosis (MS) • back pain • stress • insomnia • anxiety • depression.