

Theory & Practice of Therapeutic Massage Course Management Guide 10.0

INSTRUCTOR NAME: _____ **DATE TAUGHT:** _____

SUBJECT: **MESSAGE PRACTICE**

TOPIC: **CLASSIFICATION OF MESSAGE MOVEMENTS**

LESSON OBJECTIVES

After completing this lesson, the student will be able to:

- LO 1** Describe four forces that deform tissue for therapeutic gain.
- LO 2** Describe the seven major categories of massage methods.
- LO 3** Outline the fundamental movements for the seven major categories of massage methods.
- LO 4** Explain and demonstrate how each factor plays a part in therapeutic massage: intention, direction, speed, length, duration, rhythm, and pressure.
- LO 5** Demonstrate mastery of basic massage movements.
- LO 6** Demonstrate passive and active joint movements.

IMPLEMENTS, EQUIPMENT, AND SUPPLIES REQUIRED:

Student	Instructor	Items
x	x	<i>Theory & Practice of Therapeutic Massage, 6th Ed text</i>
	x	<i>Theory & Practice of Therapeutic Massage, 6th Ed. Course Management Guide CD-ROM</i>
x	x	Note-taking supplies and devices
x	x	Tables, Linens, Bolsters, and Lubricant

FACILITY: Theory Classroom/Lab

TIME ALLOTMENT: 4 to 8 hours (Adjust the time based on the school schedule and student activities/participation.)

PRIOR STUDENT ASSIGNMENT:

1. Read Chapter 10 in the *Theory & Practice of Therapeutic Massage, 6th Ed. text.*
2. Complete Chapter 9 in the *Theory & Practice of Therapeutic Massage, 6th Ed. Workbook.*
3. Other: _____

INSTRUCTOR TEACHING PATH:

- | | |
|---|--|
|  Instructor Materials and Supplies |  Pre-Assessment |
|  Lesson Activities |  Instructor Demonstration |
|  Student Materials and Supplies |  Post-Assessment |

EDUCATOR REFERENCES:

1. *Theory & Practice of Therapeutic Massage, 6th Ed. text*
2. *Theory & Practice of Therapeutic Massage, 6th Ed. Workbook and Course Management Guide CD-ROM*

LESSON ACTIVITIES

1. **Perform Common Massage Methods.** Create two lists of the seven common massage methods (static, gliding, torsion, shearing, oscillating, percussive, and joint movements) with the methods appearing in different orders in each list. Have students pair off and then give each a different list. One student will close his or her eyes while the other student performs the first type of movement on the list. The student whose eyes are closed must identify which type of movement is being performed. This continues until the student has correctly identified each movement on the list. Then students switch places and repeat the exercise. Afterward, ask students whether they had any difficulty identifying any of the movements, and if so, why.
2. **Practice Intent with Touch.** Have students practice intent with touch by completing this experiment. Have students pair up, and then have one stand behind the other, who is sitting. Next, have the standing students do a little bit of shoulder and scalp work while thinking different thoughts/feelings (such as boredom, anger, love, fright, etc.) for a few minutes each. Make sure students keep their hands on the person they are massaging while the thoughts/feelings shift. Differences are subtle, but sometimes the person giving and/or the person receiving can actually feel the difference in touch when the therapist's thoughts change.
3. **Apply Massage Movements.** Have students practice each type of movement (including static touch, the gliding methods, the torsion methods, the shearing methods, the oscillating methods, and the percussion methods) on each other, but have them work through clothing or on the back only. Have them practice applying the various techniques with their thumbs, fingers, palms, fists, and forearms (save elbows for later when they have become more familiar with sense of depth in massage). Take time to demonstrate proper body mechanics, and provide continual feedback on mechanics (just as you would the application of technique).
4. **Perform Passive Joint Mobilization.** Have students practice performing passive joint mobilization. Ask students to try to feel when stretch begins. Make sure that students move slowly in and out of stretches and encourage verbal feedback often. There will be opportunities to practice this type of movement in future chapters, but this will help introduce joint manipulation.

INSPIRATION FOR THE DAY

Prepare a personal quote or story about how **Classification of Massage Movements** relates to massage therapy to use as a conversation generator.

WHY STUDY CLASSIFICATION OF MASSAGE MOVEMENTS?

- Classic massage movements are the staple in which most other massage modalities are built. By understanding the effects and theory behind each type of massage stroke, therapists can build better routines and better treatment plans.
- Learning these classic massage movements gives you the phrases to build your massage repertoire.
- Understanding the effects each stroke has on the body will help therapists modify their type of touch (deep, light, fast, slow, short, long, etc.). This is also the foundation for relaxation massage.

LESSON PLAN 10.0

SUBJECT OUTLINE AND IN-DEPTH NOTES TO SHARE DURING PRESENTATION

I. INTRODUCTION

Massage movements are to therapeutic massage what words are to language or notes to music.

✦ UNDERSTANDING

To practice massage, understanding the movements is imperative.

1. Mastery

As a massage therapist, the more mastery you have of the movements, the better you can create a work of art each time you choose and combine movements according to each client's needs.

2. Massage can be tailored

There are any number of massage manipulations and possible combinations of strokes, so a massage can be tailored to the specific needs of each client.

3. More than movement of hands

Regardless of whether a massage routine is standard or specialized for the specific needs of the client, there is much more to applying strokes than the movement of the hands.

4. Massage delivery

The continuous interaction of the client and therapist, the purpose for the session, and the intent with which each manipulation is delivered affect the delivery and outcome of the massage.

II. UNDERSTAND FORCES IMPACTING TISSUE DEFORMATION

Over 250 styles and forms of massage and bodywork are practiced today.

✦ CATEGORIZATION

They can be categorized based on their underlying philosophy, how they address the body, and the techniques they use.

1. Many carry the name of the individual who created the practice.

Examples include Rolfing, Trager, Bowen Technique, and others.

2. Some are named for the tissues or body systems affected.

Examples include craniosacral, neuromuscular, and myofascial techniques.

✦ TECHNIQUES

Some styles have specific techniques, while others use classical techniques in a specific manner.

1. Nearly all of these styles and forms consist of the practitioner's hands, arms, or feet contacting the client's body in such a way that the tissues are deformed, resulting in a therapeutic effect.

A. FORCES AND SOFT TISSUE DEFORMATION

A contemporary and comprehensive way to examine the application of massage technique to the soft tissues is to consider forces that are applied to the soft tissue and the effects of those forces.

1. Force

A force is something that internally or externally causes the soft tissue structures to deform or the body to change its position.

a. **Soft tissue deformation**

Soft tissue deformation is the change in the shape of soft tissues as the result of external or internally applied forces on those tissues.

b. Internal forces

Soft tissue deformation may result from muscle tension or the force of gravity pulling on the tissues.

c. Body mechanics

Body mechanics may cause soft tissues to tighten and shorten or weaken and lengthen, resulting in possible nerve compression, pain, or dysfunction.

d. External forces

External forces may be applied therapeutically to positively affect soft tissue structures.

i. Forces create loads by pushing, pulling, or twisting the body in a variety of ways.

e. Soft tissues are directly affected by applying therapeutic forces.

Skin, subcutaneous fascia, deep fascia or myofascia, and muscle are affected.

i. Nerves, nerve endings, blood vessels, and lymph associated with those soft tissues are also affected.

f. Indirect or reflex effects

Forces applied to the nerve endings and energy meridians also have indirect or reflex effects on other systems of the body.

g. Knowledge of anatomy and physiology, and the effects of forces applied to the soft tissue on these anatomical features

Knowledge helps the therapist determine which strokes to use to provide the client a positive outcome.

2. External forces

External forces can be categorized as compressive forces or compression, tensile forces or tension, twisting forces or torsion, and shearing forces.

a. They are often employed in combination.

b. Positive deformation

Massage movements apply external forces appropriately and with the right amount of intensity to deform tissues in a positive way.

i. Forces applied with too much intensity may result in excessive tissue deformation, thus causing injury if the muscles are overstretched or the fibers torn or bruised.

ii. Too little intensity may not initiate a therapeutic result but still may be pleasurable to the client.

iii. External forces applied with the proper amount and intensity deform tissues with positive results.

c. Compressive forces or compression

Compressive forces or compression may deform the tissues by pressing perpendicularly into the tissues against the underlying bone. See **Figure 10-1** on page 356 of the student textbook.

i. Compressive forces or compression are done using the fingers, the palms, the entire hand, fists, or elbows.

ii. Action

The action compacts, presses, constricts, or occludes the target tissues.

- iii. Therapeutic intent
 - Compressive forces or compression may be used as an assessment tool to examine receptivity, resistance, tension, tissue density, or mobility of the soft tissue.
 - a) Therapeutically, it is used to enhance local circulation and for purposes of sedation or stimulation.
- iv. Function
 - It can override nerve impulses, separate fascia, and have an impact on ligaments, organs, and other structures.
- v. Effects
 - a) The initial effect is to press together or reduce the space between structures.
 - b) The secondary effect is a resulting rebound or opening and expansion of the compressed tissues.
- vi. Alternate application
 - Compression can also be applied from the ends of the muscle toward the muscle belly in special techniques such as position release or strain-counterstrain. See **Figure 10-2** on page 357 of the student textbook.
 - a) These techniques use body position to passively shorten or compress the muscle in order to reset the neural feedback or proprioceptive circuits.
- d. Tensile forces or tension
 - Tension or elongation forces deform the tissue by pulling the layers of tissue structure apart from one another. See **Figure 10-3** on page 357 of the student textbook.
 - i. Elongation
 - Elongation is the opposite of compression.
 - a) It can be done by engaging the tissue with two hands and then moving the two hands away from one another using little or no lubricant to elongate or stretch the tissue between the hands.
 - b) It helps elongate shortened tissue, reduce adhesions, and improve range of motion.
 - ii. Tension can also be applied by tractioning, pulling, stretching, or lengthening the target tissues.
 - It can be used to separate or stretch muscle fibers or to enhance the elasticity of fascia and other soft tissues.
 - iii. Tension created by tensile forces is different from muscle tension.
 - Muscle tension is the result of increased motor nerve activity causing the muscle to contract or increase its tone.
 - iv. Injury
 - Extreme or sudden tensile force on soft tissues is a common cause of injuries such as ligament sprains, muscle strains, and nerve traction injuries.
- e. Twisting forces or torsion
 - Twisting forces or torsion deform the tissue by compressing and twisting one end of the structure in one direction while the other end is held or compressed and twisted in the opposite direction. See **Figure 10-4** on page 357 of the student textbook.
 - i. Kneading and wringing movements
 - Kneading and wringing movements help us break adhesive bonds between individual tissue fibers and enhance local circulation, helping make muscle tissue more pliable.
- f. Shearing forces
 - Shearing forces deform the tissue by shifting different structures against each other or pulling adjacent sections of the structure in opposite directions.
 - i. Friction techniques
 - Friction techniques are a prime example of when the therapist's fingers drop into the muscle and connective tissue and use deep back-and-forth or circular movements to move the fibers of the tissue against one another.

- a) Shearing forces generate heat, creating therapeutic inflammation that warms the connective tissue, thus helping to increase its pliability.
- ii. Benefits
 - Techniques that use shearing forces help reduce adhesions and reorganize collagen and fiber alignment.

III. DESCRIBE THE SEVEN COMMON MASSAGE METHODS

Hands-on methods common to many massage and bodywork styles incorporate forces that result in tissue deformation; there are seven major categories of methods.

A. STATIC METHODS

Static methods deform the soft tissue in various ways in which hand positions are held for a fixed length of time.

1. Application
 - These may be applied with the fingertips, the entire hand, the thumb or braced thumb, forearm, or elbow.
 - a. They may involve gently resting the hand on the body, pressing into a pressure point, or holding or supporting the body in such a way that no movement is visible.
2. Benefits
 - Depending on the therapeutic intention, these skills may help establish trust, create stillness, and sedate or stimulate the nervous system or subtle energy systems of the recipient.
3. Techniques
 - Techniques include stationary touch, ischemic compression on trigger points, and holding methods in position release and MET techniques. (These techniques are discussed in Chapter 15, Clinical Massage Techniques.)
 - a. Static methods also come into play when stabilizing a body part to create a fulcrum point or to limit the motion of one body part or muscle to allow the specific movement of another part or muscle.



Demonstrate the use of static touch.

B. GLIDING METHODS

Gliding strokes are applied with a smooth continuous motion that, except for energy or aura strokes, do not lose contact with client skin.

1. Application
 - Gliding strokes may be applied with light, moderate, or deep pressure.
 - a. Energy or aura strokes are applied with a very light pressure or possibly very close to but not touching the skin.
 - b. Gliding strokes can be applied using the fingertips, the palm of the hand, a soft fist, or forearm.
2. Depth of application
 - Depending on the depth with which gliding strokes are applied, different forces come into play, affecting a variety of body tissues and systems.
 - a. Lighter methods
 - Lighter methods help apply lubricant evenly, warm the tissues, introduce the client to deeper techniques, feel pleasurable, and stimulate the parasympathetic nervous system response, which promotes relaxation.

- b. Deeper strokes
Deeper strokes deform the tissue with tensile, shearing, and compressive forces.
- 3. Function
These strokes are used to introduce the therapist's touch, gather information about the quality of the tissues, and identify palpable irregularities.
 - a. Gliding is used to distinguish one type of tissue from another and detect texture density and tension.
 - b. With skill, gliding engages various strata of tissues from the aura to the skin, subcutaneous tissue, intra/intermuscular fascia, blood and lymph vessels, deeper layers of muscle, and down to the periosteum and bone.
Gradually increasing the pressure deepens the contact.

 **Demonstrate a gliding movement.**

C. TORSION METHODS

Torsion methods apply a force that deforms the tissue by compressing and twisting one end of the structure in one direction while the other end is held motionless, compressed, and twisted in the opposite direction.

- 1. Kneading methods
In kneading methods, muscle is lifted away from the underlying structures with the hands and rolled through the fingers and pressed against the other hand.
- 2. Other techniques that use torsion
Other techniques that use torsion are skin rolling, fulling, and wringing.
- 3. Benefits
Torsion methods help enhance local circulation while making tissues more pliable by loosening adhered fibers.

 **Demonstrate a torsion movement.**

D. SHEARING METHODS

Shearing methods apply a force that deforms the tissue by pulling or moving a perpendicular section of the structure in opposite directions or by shifting different structures against each other.

- 1. Best illustrated with friction methods
These methods include circular, cross-fiber, and linear friction techniques.

 **Demonstrate a shearing movement.**

E. OSCILLATING METHODS

Oscillating methods deform soft tissues with the momentum created by a back-and-forth vibrating, rocking motion.

- 1. They are illustrated in vibration techniques, shaking and rocking, or jostling movements.
- 2. Benefits
 - a. Depending on the location, technique, depth, and duration of an oscillating method, benefits vary, including stimulating or relaxing the nervous system, loosening muscles, or stimulating peristalsis.
 - b. They may help release emotional holding, reduce tension in muscles, create movement and open joints, reduce tension on attachments, reveal holding patterns in tissue, and move stagnant energy.

- c. They create waves and rhythms that penetrate tissues and stimulate, tonify, or sedate the nervous system or underlying organs.

 **Demonstrate an oscillating movement.**

F. PERCUSSIVE METHODS

Percussive methods use a rapid, rhythmic contact with the client's body by the therapist's hands held in various formations.

1. Function

They initially stimulate and then relax the tissues, warm the muscles, and stimulate the nervous system.

2. Methods

Percussive methods include tapotement, or tapping, slapping, cupping, hacking, and beating.

 **Demonstrate a percussion movement.**

G. JOINT MOVEMENT METHODS

Joint movement methods include passive joint movements, passive stretching, active joint movements, such as active assisted and active resisted joint movements, and range of motion (ROM) techniques. These may also include muscle energy techniques (MET) and proprioceptive neuromuscular facilitation techniques (PNF).

1. Function

They encourage more freedom of movement by stretching muscles and fascia, renewing the body's awareness of movement potential, stimulating the production of synovial fluid to lubricate the joints, and stimulating lymph and blood flow in the area.

 **ENGAGE: Refer to Activity #1.**

 **Demonstrate a joint movement.**

IV. LIST THE MASSAGE MOVEMENTS BY METHOD

The following strokes are the fundamental manipulations used in Swedish massage and are the foundation of most massage styles practiced today.

A. INDICATIONS AND EFFECTS

The massage practitioner must understand the indications for and effects of the manipulations.

B. CATEGORIES OF MOVEMENT

Most massage treatments combine one or more of these movements, as divided into the seven major categories.

1. Static methods

- a. Superficial touch
- b. Deep touch
- c. Holding

2. Gliding methods

- a. Aura stroking
- b. Feather stroking

- c. Superficial gliding or effleurage movements
- d. Deep gliding
- 3. Torsion methods
 - a. Kneading or petrissage
 - b. Fulling
 - c. Skin rolling
 - d. Wringing
- 4. Shearing methods
 - a. Superficial friction
 - b. Deep friction
 - i. Circular friction
 - ii. Cross-fiber friction
 - iii. Longitudinal friction
 - c. Rolling
 - d. Chucking
 - e. Compression
- 5. Oscillating methods
 - a. Shaking
 - b. Jostling
 - c. Rocking
 - d. Vibration
 - i. Manual
 - ii. Mechanical
- 6. Percussion movements or tapotement
 - a. Tapping
 - b. Cupping
 - c. Slapping
 - d. Hacking
 - e. Beating
- 7. Joint movements
 - a. Passive joint movements
 - b. Active joint movements
 - i. Active assistive movements
 - ii. Active resistive movements

C. INTENT

The intention with which a massage is given or a technique is applied greatly influences its effect.

1. Purpose

Each manipulation is applied in a specific way for a particular purpose.

2. Scientific practice

The practice of massage becomes scientific only when the practitioner recognizes the purpose and effects of each movement and adapts the treatment to the client's condition for the desired results.



ENGAGE: Refer to Activity #2.

V. DISCUSS FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE MASSAGE STROKES

The manner in which massage strokes are applied determines the effect they have on the client, and the intention, direction, speed, length, duration, rhythm, and pressure of each stroke play a part in that effect.

✦ CONTROL

The practitioner controls these various qualities according to the condition and wishes of the client and the purpose of the massage.

A. THERAPEUTIC INTENTION

Intention is a mental process of consciously holding a desired goal or outcome in mind when engaging in or performing an activity.

1. Description

Therapeutic intent refers to the mindfulness with which a selected series of treatment options are chosen and implemented.

a. The intention with which a particular massage manipulation or treatment is given affects the outcome.

2. Choice of technique

Depending on the therapeutic intent of the massage session, the choice of massage techniques may vary greatly.

a. If the intent is for general relaxation, the choice of massage strokes may include long gliding strokes with a slow steady rhythm.

b. The choice of techniques would be quite different if the intent is pain relief or increased flexibility.

3. Determination of intent

The therapeutic intent is usually determined as a result of the pre-massage interview and assessment and is influenced by the wishes and needs of the client as well as the desired outcome of the treatment.

a. An infant massage will have a very different intention from a sports massage.

b. The therapeutic intention of the massages described in this chapter is wellness and relaxation.

That intention influences how the following massage movements are applied.

B. ENGAGING THE TISSUES

Engaging the tissues infers working with and into the various layers of the soft tissue.

1. Process

To “engage” the tissues, the therapist makes contact with, senses the integrity of, sinks deeper into, responds to the feedback, and communicates with the tissues for therapeutic benefit.

2. Quality of touch

Engaging the tissues involves a quality of touch that is noninvasive and evokes a sensitivity and communication with the tissues.

C. DIRECTION

The direction of a stroke helps determine its influence on the underlying tissues.

1. Strokes toward the heart

Strokes toward the heart enhance venous blood and lymph circulation, reduce edema, and tend to be relaxing and soothing

See **Figure 10-8** on page 362 of the student textbook.

2. Strokes away from the heart or into the tissues
These tend to be more stimulating and energizing.
3. Strokes across the fiber orientation of the tissues
These tend to stretch the tissue and soften adhesions. See *Figure 10-9* on page 362 of the student textbook.

D. SPEED

The speed with which a particular stroke is delivered is partially determined by the intention of the massage and in particular by the intention of the individual stroke.

1. Quicker strokes
Quicker strokes tend to be more invigorating and stimulating.
2. Slower, more rhythmic strokes
Slower, more rhythmic strokes tend to be more relaxing.
 - a. Most of the techniques in this text are intended to be relaxing; therefore, they tend to be relatively slow and rhythmical.

E. LENGTH

The length or excursion is how far the stroke travels over the body; this particularly applies to gliding or effleurage.

1. It can be as short as an inch or two and concentrate on a part of the hand, neck, or face. See *Figure 10-10* on page 362 of the student textbook.
2. It can glide over the entire length of an arm, leg, or the back.
On the arm or leg, for instance, the first strokes can cover the entire length of the limb, followed by several shorter gliding strokes concentrated on a particular segment of the limb. See *Figure 10-11* on page 362 of the student textbook.

F. RHYTHM

People have individual vibrations and an innate sense of rhythm.

1. Individual differences
Some people are high-strung (tense), whereas others are low-key (relaxed.)
2. Goal
The goal is to work with people according to their particular needs and not follow a personal agenda, possibly working against the client's natural rhythm.
3. Consider each individual situation
 - a. Relaxation
Usually, someone coming for a massage is seeking a relaxing, rejuvenating experience.
 - i. The rhythm must be steady and slightly slower than the client's pace to have a sedating effect.
 - b. Athletic training
If the massage is part of an athletic training program, however, the rhythm can be more upbeat.
 - c. Practitioners can develop skills to tune in to other people and work more effectively with clients as individual persons.
Clients return to the practitioner who is not only well trained but also sensitive and aware.
4. Breathing
Breathing is part of the body's natural rhythm and is important to the practitioner's stamina and ability to move easily while giving massage.
 - a. Be aware of the client's breathing.

- i. As the massage begins, encourage the client to take several full, relaxing breaths.
- ii. During the massage, pay attention to both the client's and your own breathing to be sure both patterns are full and relaxed

G. DURATION

Duration refers to how long or the number of times a stroke is done on a particular area; it could also refer to the amount of time spent using a variety of strokes on a particular area of the body.

1. Too much time
Spending too much time on an area might be fatiguing or result in soreness.
2. Combination of strokes
The combination of all the strokes given during a session determines the duration of the entire massage.
3. Monitor your time
The time spent on each area should be monitored so there is adequate time to address all the areas of the body that are intended within a suitable time frame for the massage.
 - a. The duration of a full-body massage should be in the neighborhood of an hour.

H. PRESSURE AND DEPTH

The practitioner must develop an awareness of the right amount of pressure used for various therapeutic situations and techniques.

1. Progression of pressure
Begin to massage an area of the body cautiously, gently, and lightly, and then apply more pressure as you become aware of underlying structures and tissue condition.
 - a. This also helps you note tension and stress buildup and determine how to proceed according to the client's body condition and sensitivity.
2. Technique and intended outcome
The pressure varies with the technique used and according to the intended outcome.
3. Client interaction
Encourage verbal feedback from the client about the amount of pressure, and be aware of the client's body language.
 - a. As tension in the area begins to dissipate and the muscles relax, the client will let you in even deeper.
 - b. When it is time to leave the area, back out gradually, smoothing the way as you go.
4. Intensity
The amount of force the practitioner applies against the client's body with their hands, thumbs, fingers, or elbows determines the pressure of the stroke.
 - a. Pressure is controlled by the practitioner according to the intention of and the type of stroke used.
 - b. Application affects intensity.
 - i. When applied with the broad surface of the hand or forearm, pressure is more diffuse and tends to be soothing and relaxing.
 - ii. When applied with the thumbs, knuckles, or point of the elbow, the pressure is more concentrated, deep, and intense.
 - c. Exercise caution
Ensure that the amount of pressure applied does not cause unnecessary pain or discomfort.
 - d. Pain
Many times, clients seek massage services because they are experiencing pain.

- i. “Good” pain

As the massage proceeds over the areas of concern, the client may experience a certain amount of discomfort that “hurts good” as the practitioner works out the congestion and tension in the tissues.

 1. This level of discomfort is to be expected.
 - ii. Pain threshold

The practitioner must use good judgment and open communication with the client to not cross the client’s “pain threshold.”

 1. If the pain threshold is crossed, the client will pull back, tighten up, and possibly lose trust in the practitioner and the massage process.

This is counterproductive to the whole massage.
 - iii. Observation and communication

It is important that the practitioner observe the client’s facial expressions and body reactions and communicate with the client—“Would you like more, less, or the same pressure?”—and adjust the amount of pressure they are using.
2. Depth

Depth refers to how deep into the tissues the effects of a particular stroke reach.

 - a. Determining factors

The depth is determined by several factors.

 - i. Intention of the movement
 - ii. Type of movement
 - iii. Size, thickness, density, condition, and quality of the tissues to which the movement is directed
 - b. Considerations

The selection of a massage movement, the amount of pressure used in the application of that movement, and the direction of the movement each play a part in the depth of the movement.
 - c. Intention

The intention of a movement initially determines what movement is chosen to do what, and also creates mental energy regarding the outcome of a particular treatment.

 - i. When the intention is to affect the more superficial or the deeper tissues, the energy of the movement is directed toward those tissues.
 - d. Quality and condition of target tissues

The quality and condition of target tissues help determine the depth of particular movements.

 - i. Contracted and tense muscle group

For a contracted and tense muscle group, the depth of the massage will be sustained in and not penetrate through those tissues.
 - ii. Relaxed and supple underlying tissues

For relaxed and supple underlying tissues, the depth of the movement can be increased, perhaps to move down through those tissues.
 - e. Pressure

More pressure does not necessarily result in deeper massage.

 - i. The practitioner must consider the condition of the tissues and then apply the selected movement with appropriate pressure to obtain the optimal depth and desired outcome according to the goals of the treatment.
 - ii. Remember the first rule of massage and bodywork: Do no harm!

VI. LEARN THE EFFECTS AND BENEFITS OF THE MASSAGE MOVEMENTS

A. STATIC TOUCH

Touch is the first technique in developing a therapeutic relationship.

1. Application

Application can be in the form of a handshake or a pat on the shoulder.

a. First/last contact

In the course of a massage, touch constitutes the first and last contact of the practitioner with the client.

b. Beginning of massage

The practitioner begins the massage with a gentle, noninvasive, superficial, stationary, or static touch to make first contact and enter the client's personal space.

i. Function

This provides the client the opportunity to become more receptive to the practitioner's touch and presence.

This moment of light touch can be used to tune in to and connect with the client before proceeding with the session.

c. During the massage

Static touch can be used during the massage if the client has a reaction such as pain or deep emotion.

i. The practitioner can use stationary touch to stay in contact but back off from the work they are doing.

d. Conclusion of massage

At the conclusion of the session, when the practitioner has finished the final relaxing strokes, a completing gesture of a brief stationary superficial touch provides closure for the practitioner and signals the client that the session is finished.

2. Communication/intent

All massage techniques use physical contact, but the quality and sense of touch convey the intent and the power of the movements.

a. Primary communication tool

Touch is the primary communication tool used by the massage therapist.

b. Gives information

The sense of touch tells clients what is happening to their bodies and gives practitioners information about the condition and response of the tissues being massaged.

c. Quality of touch

The quality of touch continually transmits information from the therapist's hands to the client in direct response to the information communicated by the client (verbally and with body language).

3. Superficial touch

Light or superficial touch is purposeful contact in which the natural and evenly distributed weight of the practitioner's thumb, finger(s), or hand is applied to a given area of the client's body.

a. Size of area

The size of the area can be adjusted as necessary by using one or more fingers, the entire hand, or both hands.

b. Specific modalities

Some therapeutic techniques employ light, stationary touch almost exclusively (e.g., Jin Shin Do, polarity, therapeutic touch, Reiki).

- c. Benefits

Touch can be remarkably effective in reducing pain, lowering blood pressure, controlling nervous irritability, or reassuring a nervous, tense client.
- d. Massage considerations

If a person demonstrates contraindications for a basic massage or has a fragile condition, a complete treatment using light touch exclusively is acceptable.
- e. Main objective of light touch

The main objective of light touch is to soothe and provide a comforting, calming connection that allows the powerful healing mechanisms of the body to function. See **Figure 10-16** on page 365 of the student textbook.
- f. Static touch using deep pressure

This is performed with one finger, the thumb, several fingers, or the entire hand. The heel of the hand, knuckles, forearm, or olecranon process of the elbow can be used, according to desired results.

 - i. Use

Applying static touch using deep pressure is indicated when calming, anesthetizing, or stimulating effects are desired.
 - ii. Function

Deep pressure is useful in soothing muscle spasms and relieving pain at reflex areas, stress points in tendons, and trigger points in muscles.
 - iii. Modalities

In addition to extensive use in trigger-point therapy, deep static touch is often applied in reflexology, sport massage, acupressure, and *shiatsu* (methods discussed in Chapters 17 and 18).
 - iv. Use caution

When using deep static touch, the practitioner must use caution to stay within the patient's pain tolerance.
 - v. Good body mechanics

Using good body mechanics is essential when applying deep pressure, to prevent injury to the practitioner.

 - a) Function

Undue strain should not be exerted to hyperextend any joint.
 - b) Use

Good body mechanics are used in such a way that pressure is delivered through the therapist's body movement and position (body weight) rather than simply by hand and upper-body strength.

See **Figures 10-17 to 10-22** on page 366 of the student textbook.

B. GLIDING METHODS

Gliding is a succession of strokes applied by gliding the hand or forearm over a somewhat extended portion of the body.

Popularity: Gliding is perhaps the most frequently used movement in Swedish or Western massage.

1. Application

Gliding can be done using a varying amount of pressure and length of strokes.

- a. Gliding strokes slide smoothly over the client's body, body part (arm or leg), or a specific area (muscle or reflex).

2. Varieties

There are four varieties of gliding, depending on the intention and depth of the stroke.

a. Aura gliding

Aura gliding is done with long strokes where the practitioner's hands come very close but do not actually touch the body.

b. Feather gliding

Feather gliding uses a very light touch of the practitioner's fingertips, usually as a completion stroke.

c. Superficial gliding

Superficial gliding employs a light touch.

d. Deep gliding

Deep gliding uses deeper pressure.



Demonstrate each of the gliding methods.

3. Firmer pressure

In gliding strokes, the pressure becomes firmer as the hand slides smoothly over the surface of the body.

a. Gliding is accomplished either with the fingers, thumbs, palm, knuckles, or forearm as follows:

- i. Over large surfaces, such as the limbs, back, chest, and abdomen, gliding is performed with the palmar surface of one or both hands or the forearm.
- ii. Over small areas, such as the face or hands, the movement is performed with the fingers or thumbs.
- iii. For very deep gliding, the palms of the hands, thumbs, knuckles, or forearms are used.

4. Ethereal body or aura gliding

Ethereal body or aura gliding is done with long, smooth strokes wherein the practitioner's hands glide the length of the client's body or body part, coming close to but not actually touching the body surface. See *Figure 10-23 on page 367 of the student textbook.*

a. Direction

The movement is usually in one direction, with the return stroke being farther from the body.

b. Function

The intention is to affect the energy fields that, according to some philosophies, surround or permeate the body.

c. Effect

The direction of the aura gliding can be along the surface of the body to enhance or impede the natural flow of energy.

d. Setting

This soothing stroke is applied only when the surrounding circumstances are very quiet and relaxed and the patient is receptive.

Final stroke

Aura gliding is sometimes used as the final stroke of a massage.

5. Feather gliding

Feather gliding is very light pressure of the fingertips or hands, with long flowing strokes; sometimes called nerve stroking. See *Figure 10-24 on page 367 of the student textbook.*

a. Direction

Feather gliding is usually applied from the center outward.

b. Use

Feather gliding is used as a completion stroke to individual areas of the body.

c. Effect

Two or three such strokes have a slightly stimulating effect on the nerves, whereas more repetitions have a more sedating response.

C. SUPERFICIAL GLIDING

Superficial gliding strokes are generally applied prior to any other movement. See **Figures 10-25 to 10-31** on pages 368 to 369 of the student textbook.

1. Application

The practitioner's hand is flexible yet firm and controlled so that as it slides smoothly over the body, it conforms to the body contours and equal pressure is applied to the body from every part of the hand.

2. Function

Superficial gliding accustoms the client to the practitioner's contact and allows the practitioner to assess the body area being massaged.

a. Distribute lubricant

Light strokes are used to distribute any lubricant used and prepare the area for other techniques.

b. Assessment

As the practitioner's hands glide over the tissues, they sense variations that indicate where specific techniques should be applied.

3. Use with other techniques

Superficial gliding is interspersed with other techniques to soothe the intensity of some deeper movements.

a. Connecting strokes

Gliding is used as connecting strokes when moving from one body area to another.

b. Swedish or Western massage

Gliding is generally the first and the last technique used on an area.

4. Effects

Slow, gentle, and rhythmic movements produce soothing effects.

a. Gliding warms and softens superficial tissues and enhances local fluid movement.

5. Quality

Although superficial gliding appears to be simple, practitioners master this technique only with extensive practice.

a. Relaxed hand

The practitioner's hand should be relaxed to mold the surface of the body part being massaged.

b. Pressure/speed

The pressure and speed of movement should remain constant.

c. Completion of stroke

On completion of the stroke, the practitioner's hand may be elevated and directed to the starting point.

d. Sometimes keep contact

In some cases, the hands stay in contact by exerting more pressure centripetally (toward the heart) and then reduce the pressure and **feather stroke** (lightly stroke) the body to return to the starting point of the stroke.

In this way, the practitioner always maintains contact with the client.

6. Benefits

Superficial gliding helps a client overcome general fatigue or restlessness.

This movement is particularly soothing to nervous or irritated people.

Clients with nervous headaches and insomnia (sleeplessness) often find relief with gentle gliding strokes of the forehead.

D. DEEP GLIDING

The term **deep gliding** indicates that the movement uses enough pressure to have a mechanical effect. See **Figures 10-32 to 10-40** on pages 370 to 371 of the student textbook.

1. Pressure
 - a. The depth of the gliding movement depends on three factors:
 - i. Pressure exerted
 - ii. Part of the hand or arm used
 - iii. Intention with which the movement is applied
2. Point of contact

Deep gliding can be applied with the hand, thumb, braced fingers, knuckles, or forearm, depending on the area of the body or tissues involved.
3. Body mechanics

The therapist must pay close attention to body mechanics when using deeper techniques.

 - a. Deeper penetration is also a result of body position, so it is important to pay close attention to joint alignment to prevent stress and injury.
4. No excessive force

Deep gliding strokes do not involve excessive force.

The pressure used:

 - i. The pressure used must always be within the comfort tolerance of the client.

Clear communication is essential.

 - ii. It should never be forceful enough to cause bruising or injury to the tissues.
5. Function

Deep gliding strokes are especially valuable when applied to the muscles and are most effective when the part undergoing treatment is in a relaxed state.

 - a. The slightest pressure of the surface is then transmitted to the deeper structures.
6. Effects
 - a. Deep gliding strokes have a shearing and elongating effect on muscle tissue and fascia.
 - b. Deep gliding also enhances local fluid movement.
 - c. Protective reflex

If the practitioner uses too much force, the client's body responds with a protective reflex that causes muscles to contract, thereby negating the desired effects of the treatment.
7. Direction

Deep gliding strokes generally follow the direction of the muscle fibers.

 - a. On the extremities, the movements are always directed from the end of a limb toward the center of the body (centripetally).
 - b. The movement is usually toward the heart or in the direction of venous and lymph flow, with the return stroke being much lighter and away from the center of the body.
 - c. Exception

The exception to this rule is deep, short strokes applied to the muscle attachments and tendons. When directed from the tendon toward the muscle belly, these strokes tend to stretch the tendon and cause a reflexive relaxation of the muscle.
8. Use
 - a. Indications for the use of deep gliding strokes include:
 - i. Increasing fluid movement
 - ii. Stretching and loosening underlying tissues
 - iii. Separating and broadening tissues

- iv. Increasing relaxation
 - v. Palpating deeper tissues
9. Effect and benefits of gliding strokes
- Gliding strokes or effleurage have the following uses or effects:
- a. Used to spread lubricant evenly
 - b. Used to assess superficial and deeper tissues
 - c. Enhances local fluid movement
 - d. Warms the tissue
 - e. Prepares the tissue for deeper work
 - f. Soothes the tissue after deeper work
 - g. Stretches and loosens superficial tissues
 - h. Has a calming effect when done slowly and a stimulating effect when done briskly
 - i. Superficial gliding has more reflexive effects, and deep gliding has more mechanical effects.
10. Body mechanics
- When using deep gliding strokes, the practitioner must use good body mechanics to prevent strain and overuse-syndrome injuries.
- a. Hand and arm positions
Hand and arm positions should direct the force of the movement into the client.
 - b. Body core
The practitioner's movement should come from the body core.
 - c. Shoulders
Shoulders should remain down and relaxed, with the wrists, fingers, or thumbs in proper alignment.
 - d. Hyperextension
Avoid hyperextension of any joint.
 - e. Weight shifting
When applying long, gliding strokes, the practitioner should shift his or her weight from the back foot to the front foot or take small steps to distribute body weight and maintain consistent pressure throughout the length of the stroke.

E. TORSION METHODS: KNEADING MOVEMENTS

In Swedish massage, kneading or petrissage is used on all fleshy areas of the body.

1. The term *petrissage*
The term *petrissage* comes from the French verb *petrir*, which means to knead or mash.
2. Torsion
Kneading applies a torsion force or torque that deforms the tissue by compressing and twisting one end of the structure in one direction while the other end is held, compressed, and twisted in the opposite direction.
3. Function
Like deep gliding, kneading enhances the fluid movement in the deeper tissues and can help soften and broaden superficial tissues.
 - a. Skillfully applied, kneading helps to reduce adhesions and stretch muscle tissue and fascia.
 - b. It may also reduce muscle atrophy and enhance muscle tone.
4. Application of kneading movements
See **Figures 10-42 to 10-46** on pages 372 to 373 of the student textbook.
In this movement, the skin and muscular tissues are raised from their ordinary position and then squeezed, twisted, rolled, or kneaded with a firm pressure.

5. Large areas of the body
Both hands work alternately as a unit.
 - a. The tissue is lifted with the palmar surface of the fingers of one hand into the palm of the other hand.
 - b. Then the process is reversed so that the fingers of the other hand lift the tissue into the palm and base of the opposite hand.
 - c. The hands alternate in a rhythmic lifting and squeezing pattern over the entire body part being massaged.
6. Smaller structures
Over smaller structures, such as the arms, the flesh is grasped between the fingers and heel of the hand or the thumb.
 - a. In both cases, the maximum amount of flesh is drawn up into the palm and gently and firmly pressed and squeezed, as if milking the tissues.
 - b. On an area such as the arm, both hands alternate, grasping the tissue on each side of the arm.
7. Even smaller structures
On even smaller structures (e.g., the hands or fingers), the flesh is held between the thumb and fingers.
8. **Fulling**
Fulling is a kneading technique in which the practitioner grasps the tissue and gently lifts and spreads it out, as if to make more space between the layers of tissue or muscle fibers. See *Figure 10-47* on page 373 of the student textbook.
 - a. Location
Fulling is applied to the muscular areas of the arm or leg.
 - b. Process
Often done with both hands simultaneously, the fleshy body part is gathered up between two hands and raised and separated by the thumbs as the part is gently stretched across the fibers of the tissue.
9. **Skin rolling**
Skin rolling is a variation of kneading in which only the skin and subcutaneous tissue are picked up between the thumbs and fingers and rolled.
 - a. Application
When first learning this technique, practitioners should use both hands.
 - i. No lubricant is used.
 - ii. Gather up a roll of skin between the thumb and fingers.
 - iii. Continue to gather in more skin with the fingers as you slowly progress along the surface of the body.
 - iv. The thumb supports the roll of skin and slowly slides along as the fingers gather up more skin.
 - v. As the fingers alternately and continuously pick up and pull the skin away from the deeper tissues, the thumb glides along in the direction of the movement, stretching the underlying fascia.
 - b. Effects
Skin rolling warms, stretches, and begins to separate adhesions between fascial sheaths.
 - c. Skin rolling is discussed further in Chapter 15 as a myofascial technique.
10. **Wringing**
Wringing is a back-and-forth movement in which both of the practitioner's hands are placed a short distance apart on either side of the limb. See *Figures 10-49 to 10-51* on page 374 of the student textbook.
 - a. Application
The movement resembles wringing out a washcloth.
 - i. The hands work in opposing directions, stretching and twisting the flesh against the bones in opposite directions.

- ii. The practitioner's whole body is engaged in the movement, and the hands make firm contact in both directions.
- iii. Pressure is not excessive enough to cause pinching or burning (irritation) of the skin, however.
- b. Effects
 - Wringing gently stretches and warms the connective fascia
- 11. Effects and benefits of torsion methods
 - a. Torsion methods have the following effects or benefits:
 - i. Mechanically loosen and soften the superficial tissues
 - ii. Encourage local fluid movement
 - iii. Broaden and stretch local tissues
 - iv. Improve muscle tone, elasticity, and pliability and relax muscles
 - v. Reduce muscle atrophy

 **Demonstrate each of the torsion methods.**

F. SHEARING METHODS: FRICTION

Friction strokes can be either superficial or deep.

1. Superficial friction

Superficial friction is the application of a brisk stroke using a quick back-and-forth movement intended to warm the area and stimulate superficial circulation.

 - a. Application

Superficial friction is usually performed with the palm of one or both hands over a larger area.

 - i. The therapist's hand moves over the client's skin in a quick, rubbing action.
 - ii. When two hands are used, they move back and forth in opposite directions.
 - b. Lubrication

Lubrication is usually not used; the slight resistance between the surface of the body and the therapist's hand creates heat and warms the superficial tissues.
2. Deep friction movements

Deep friction movements involve moving more-superficial layers of flesh against the deeper tissues.

 - a. Application

The practitioner presses one layer of tissue against another layer to flatten, broaden, or stretch the tissue.
 - b. Effect

Friction is performed in such a way that it also produces heat.

 1. Metabolism

As heat increases, metabolic activity increases.
 2. Interstitial fluids

Friction also increases the rate at which exchanges take place between the cells and the interstitial fluids (i.e., fluids situated between the cells and vessels in the tissues of an organ or body part).
 3. Muscles

The added heat and energy also affect the connective tissue surrounding the muscles, making them more pliable so that they function more efficiently.
 - c. Benefits of deep friction movements

The shearing action of friction helps separate the tissues and soften adhesions and fibrosis, especially in muscle tissue and fascia.

- i. Softens fascia
It softens the amorphous (massed) ground substance between layers of fascia.
- ii. Joints
Friction also aids in absorption of fluid around the joints.
- iii. Circulation
Friction influences the circulation and glandular activity of the skin.
 - a) With friction strokes, the area usually becomes red, indicating a superficial hyperemia or an increased flow of blood to the skin surface.
Hyperemia may be the result of histamine release from mast cells, which causes permeability of the local capillaries.
- iv. Movement of layers of tissue
Friction strokes involve moving a more superficial layer of tissue against deeper layers of tissue.
 - a) This requires pressure on the skin while it is being moved over its underlying structures.
 - b) The skin and the hand move as a unit against the deeper tissues.
 - c) Over muscular parts or fleshy layers, the palms of the hands, the flat of the fingers, or the thumbs apply friction.
 - d) Over small surfaces, the fleshy pads of the fingertips or thumbs apply friction.

 **Demonstrate the superficial friction and deep friction methods.**

3. **Circular friction**

Friction movements can be circular or directional; in circular friction, the fingers or the palm of the hand contact the skin to move it in a circular pattern over the deeper tissues. *See Figures 10-54 to 10-57 on page 376 of the student textbook.*

a. Function

Circular friction is intended to produce heat and stretch and loosen the fascia.

- i. It is a general stroke used to warm the area in preparation for more specific or deeper work.

b. Application

The palm or pads of the fingers make contact with the skin and move the skin and more superficial tissues over the deeper layers in a small circular pattern.

- i. When performing circular friction, the fingers or hand do not slide over the skin in a circular manner. The fingers or hand move underlying structure without gliding over skin.

c. Effects

The intent is to move the superficial layer of tissue over a deeper layer, resulting in a gentle stretching and warming of the area, although the hand can move along to cover an extended area with circular friction.

- i. Friction is also valuable for palpating an area when assessing the condition of the underlying tissues.
- ii. When working deeply on an area, circular friction and superficial gliding strokes are useful to soothe and calm the client before, after, and interspersed with deep techniques.

4. Directional friction

Directional friction can be either cross-fiber or longitudinal friction.

a. **Cross-fiber friction**

As the name implies, it is applied in a transverse direction across the muscle, tendon, or ligament fibers. *See Figures 10-58 to 10-59 on page 377 of the student textbook.*

i. Application

Cross-fiber friction is usually applied with the tips of the fingers or the thumb directly to the site of a lesion.

ii. Purpose

The intention of cross-fiber friction is to broaden, separate, and align the fibrous tissue, break up adhesions, and soften scar tissue.

iii. Stroke

The stroke is broad enough to cover and deep enough to reach the targeted tissue.

1. When massaging a fibrous band, the cross-fiber friction stroke is not so broad that it snaps across the fiber.
2. The fingers do not move over the skin, but rather move the skin and superficial tissues across the target tissue.

iv. Compression

Another method of applying cross-fiber friction in some situations is to apply compression to an affected area and move the limb so that the underlying bone provides the shearing or frictioning movement.

1. This technique is especially applicable to points near the elbow and is done by compressing the points and rotating the forearm.

v. Use

Cross-fiber or transverse friction is a preferred technique for rehabilitation of fibrous tissue injuries.

vi. Effects

1. While the injury is healing, transverse friction, when properly applied, promotes the formation of elastic fibrous tissue.
2. At the same time, it reduces the formation of fibrosis and scar tissue, so that the healed injury retains its original strength and pliability.
3. Applied to old injury sites, cross-fiber friction breaks down some of the adhesions and fibrosis, increasing pliability and mobility while reducing the chance of reinjury to the area.

b. Longitudinal friction

When using longitudinal friction, the practitioner's hand moves in the same direction as the tissue fibers.

i. Effect

This technique is intended to stretch the tissue and align the collagen fibrils within the fascia.

c. Effects and benefits of torsion methods

i. Techniques produce the following benefits and effects:

- a) Superficial friction causes superficial hyperemia.
- b) Moving one layer of tissue against another produces heat in the skin and superficial tissues.
- c) These methods stretch, broaden, and loosen tissues.
- d) Torsion methods break down connective tissue adhesions and increase pliability of the tissues.
- e) Torsion methods cause a mild therapeutic inflammation.
- f) Torsion methods promote more pliable scar formation.

Demonstrate the circular friction and directional friction methods.

5. Rolling

Rolling is rapid back-and-forth movement with the hands in which the flesh is shaken and rolled around the axis, or the imaginary centerline, of the body part. See *Figures 10-60 and 10-61* on page 378 of the student textbook.

a. Intention

Rolling warms and relaxes the tissue; rolling encourages deep muscle relaxation.

6. Chucking

Chucking is a movement accomplished by grasping the flesh firmly in one or both hands and moving it up and down along the bone.

It is a series of quick movements along the axis of the limb. See *Figure 10-62* on page 378 of the student textbook.

7. Compression

Another form of friction, compression is using rhythmic pressing movements directed into muscle tissue by either the hand or a loose fist.

a. Palmar compression

Palmar compression is done with the whole hand (palm side), the heel of the hand, or a closed fist over the large muscular areas of the body.

b. Application

Palmar compression uses a rhythmic pumping action directed into the muscle perpendicular to the underlying bone.

i. Palmar compression can be done directly on the skin or over clothing and without using lubricant.

c. Effect

Compression movements cause enhanced circulation and a lasting hyperemia in the tissue.

d. Sports massage

Compression is a popular movement used in pre-event sports massage to bring more blood and fluid into the tissues, preparing them to exert maximum energy sooner and for a longer period.

 **Demonstrate rolling, chucking, and compression movements.**

G. OSCILLATING METHODS

Oscillating methods include shaking, jostling, rocking, and vibration.

1. Shaking

Shaking is an oscillating movement that allows the client to release tension and at the same time, it indicates to the practitioner where the client could be storing tension in the body.

a. Application

The relaxed body part is gently yet forcefully shaken laterally or horizontally so that the relaxed flesh flops around the bone.

b. Assessment

The practitioner observes where the body moves freely and where it seems to be stiff.

i. Rigidity

Rigidity indicates tense areas that require more attention.

c. Trager

Trager is a type of bodywork that uses extensive shaking and rocking to locate and release tension.

2. Jostling

Jostling releases muscle tension, increases circulation, and relaxes muscles.

a. Use

Jostling is most effective after muscles have been exerted, such as following a workout or competition.

b. Application

Jostling is done when the muscle is in a shortened and relaxed position.

i. Grasp across the entire muscle, lift it slightly away from its position, and, while the muscle remains relaxed, shake the muscle quickly across its axis.

3. Rocking

Rocking uses a push-pull-and-release movement applied to the client's body in either a side-to-side or an up-and-down direction. See *Figure 10-66 on page 379 of the student textbook*.

a. Application

The body is pushed away slightly and allowed to roll back completely and then pushed away again at a rhythmic rate that is unique to each person.

b. Rhythm

The practitioner can sense the client's rhythm within a few repetitions and then maintains that rhythm and applies it to other movements during the massage.

c. Benefit

Rocking is perhaps the most soothing and relaxing of all the massage movements.

 **Demonstrate shaking, jostling, and rocking movements.**

4. **Vibration**

Vibration is a continuous shaking or trembling movement transmitted from the practitioner's hand and arm (or from an electrical appliance) to a fixed point or along a selected area of the body. See *Figures 10-67 to 10-73 on pages 380–381 of the student textbook.*

a. Function

Vibration is often used to desensitize a point or area.

i. Nerve trunks and centers

Nerve trunks and centers are sometimes chosen as sites for the application of vibratory movements.

ii. Larger muscles

Vibration is typically used on larger muscles, avoiding bony areas.

b. Manual contact vibration

Manual contact vibration is usually done with the pads at the ends of the fingers or the soft touch of the palm of the hand.

i. Application

The therapist makes light contact and shakes the hand back and forth as quickly as possible without moving over the skin where contact is being made.

ii. Rate of vibration

The rate of vibration should be controlled by the massage practitioner.

a) Manual vibrations

Manual vibrations usually range from 5 to 10 times per second; mechanical vibrations can be adjusted to give from 10 to 100 vibrations per second.

 **Demonstrate manual vibration.**

iii. Mechanical vibrators

There are a variety of models of manual vibrators, which can be classified by size.

a) A popular small model straps on the back of the practitioner's hand.

b) Another popular size is held (usually with two hands) by the practitioner and moved over the client's body.

c) A larger floor-standing unit uses a flexible applicator arm to deliver its therapeutic effects.

iv. Function

Mechanical vibrators can also be classified by the vibrating action that they use.

a) An oscillating vibrator has a back-and-forth movement.

b) An orbital vibrator has a circular motion.

c) Shaking

Oscillating and orbital vibrators produce a shaking movement when applied to the body.

d) Thumping

Another type of vibrator produces a "thumping" action.

This rapid percussion/compression is directed into the tissues rather than laterally along their surface.

v. Benefit of using vibrators

Vibrators can enhance the effects of the massage and at the same time reduce the amount of physical exertion required of the practitioner.

vi. Effects of vibratory movements

The effects of vibratory movements depend on the rate of vibration, the intensity of pressure, and the duration of the treatment.

- a) This form of massage is soothing and brings about relaxation and release of tension when applied lightly.
- b) It is stimulating when applied with pressure.
- c) An anesthetizing effect is experienced when vibrations are applied for a prolonged period.

H. PERCUSSION METHODS

Percussion methods, traditionally called **tapotement**, include quick, striking manipulations such as tapping, beating, and slapping, which are highly stimulating to the body.

1. Application

Percussion movements are executed with both hands either simultaneously or alternately.

a. Force

They do not use much force.

b. Contact

Tapotement is a quick, glancing contact wherein the practitioner's wrists remain very relaxed.

2. General effects

Tapotement tones the muscles, imparts a healthy glow, and stimulates the part being massaged.

a. Function

With each striking movement, the muscles first contract and then relax as the fingers are moved off the body.

3. Caution

Percussion movements should never be applied directly over the spine or muscles that are abnormally contracted or over any sensitive area such as the kidneys or other endangerment sites.

4. Examples

a. The movements can be done in the following ways:

- i. Tapping with tips of the fingers
- ii. Cupping with the cupped palm of the hand
- iii. Slapping with flattened palm and fingers of the hand
- iv. Hacking with the ulnar border of the hand
- v. Beating with a softly clenched hand

5. **Tapping**

Tapping, the lightest, most superficial of the percussion techniques, is used over delicate, sensitive areas such as the face.

a. Application

Only the fingertips are used for tapping.

- i. The fingers can be slightly flexed so that only the tips make contact, or, with the fingers held relatively straight, the pads perform a superficial slapping technique.

6. **Cupping**

Cupping is a technique often employed by respiratory therapists to help break up lung congestion. See **Figure 10-75** on page 382 of the student textbook.

a. Application

Cupping is most often employed over the rib cage.

- i. To perform cupping, form a cup by keeping the fingers together and slightly flexed and the thumb held close to the side of the palm.
- ii. On each percussion, the perimeter of the hand contacts the body.
- iii. The result is a hollow popping sound.

7. **Slapping**

Slapping is very stimulating and must be used sparingly. See *Figure 10-76* on page 382 of the student textbook.

a. Effect

Slapping encourages peripheral circulation and gives a “glow” to the area.

b. Application

It is applied with the palmar surface of the fingers and the hand.

c. Sound

Slapping produces a crisp smacking sound when done correctly.

d. Relaxed wrists

As with all percussion strokes, the hands and wrists always remain loose and relaxed.

e. Caution

Heavy pressure is avoided.

f. Use

Slapping uses a rhythmic, glancing contact with the body.

8. **Hacking**

Much like vibration, hacking encourages relaxation and local circulation. See *Figure 10-77* on page 383 of the student textbook.

a. Location

Hacking is typically done over larger muscle groups or surfaces such as along the sacrospinalis group, hamstrings, and calves.

b. Effect

Some theories claim that hacking stimulates the nerve responses in muscles and helps firm them.

c. Application

Hacking is a rapid striking movement that can be done with one or both hands.

i. When both hands are used, the hands can strike alternately or together.

ii. A quick glancing strike is made with the little finger and the ulnar side of the hand.

iii. The wrist and fingers remain loose and relaxed, and the fingers are slightly spread apart.

iv. As the side of the hand strikes the body, the fingers come together, causing a slight vibrating effect.

9. **Beating**

Beating is the heaviest and deepest form of percussion and is done over the thicker, denser, and fleshier areas of the body. See *Figure 10-78* on page 383 of the student textbook.

a. Application

i. The hands are held in a loose fist.

ii. The therapist makes contact with the ulnar aspect of both hands either together or alternately.

iii. The wrists are relaxed so that the contact is the result of a rebounding, whip-like action of the hand and wrist.

iv. The force is never heavy or hard.

10. Effects and benefits of percussion

The effects and benefits of percussion vary according to the variation of the technique used, the area of the body, the intensity, and the duration of the application.

a. The effects and benefits include the following:

i. Initially, the effect is stimulating.

ii. Prolonged application encourages relaxation.

- iii. Prolonged application has an anesthetic effect on some nerve endings.
- iv. Deeper applications cause vasodilation and increased circulation.
- v. Cupping aids in breaking up lung congestion.

 **Demonstrate each of the percussion methods.**

 **ENGAGE: Refer to Activity #3.**

I. JOINT MOVEMENTS

A great variety of joint movements can be used to move any joint in the body, including joints of the toes, knees, hips, arms, and vertebrae, or even the less movable joints of the pelvis and cranium.

1. Basic classifications

Basic classifications of joint movements are passive and active.

2. **Passive joint movements (PJMs)**

Passive joint movements are done while the client remains quietly relaxed and allow the practitioner to stretch and move the part of the body to be exercised.

a. Assessment tool

Passive joint movements can be used as an assessment tool to determine normal movement (full ROM without restriction or pain).

b. Function

Passive joint movements gently stretch the fibrous connective tissue and move the joint through its range of motion.

c. Use

Passive joint movements are used therapeutically to improve joint mobility and range of motion, always working within the client's comfort level.

d. Application

i. When performing PJMs, hold and support the limb so that the movement is directed toward the target joint.

ii. Move the limb in a normal movement pattern for that joint.

iii. Move the limb to the full extent of possible movement within the client's comfort level.

e. Assessment

If the movement is for assessment purposes, move only to the point of resistance and note the extent and quality of the movement.

f. Therapeutic

If the movement is therapeutic, challenge the range of movement by slightly extending or pushing into the end of the movement.

 **Demonstrate the passive joint movements.**

3. **Active joint movements**

The client actively participates in the exercise by contracting the muscles involved in the movement.

a. **Active range-of-motion** movements

The client moves the limb or the joint without any intervention from the practitioner.

b. Assessment

This is a common assessment tool to determine which, if any, limitations might exist.

i. The assessment can be done before and after treatment to note any changes.

c. Categories of active joint movements that involve the practitioner follow:

i. Active assistive joint movements

Active assistive joint movements are therapeutic techniques to restore mobility in an injured limb.

a) Use

They are used when a client is unable to move a limb or cannot move it through a full range of motion.

b) Application

- 1) When performing active assistive joint movements, the practitioner instructs the client to make a specific movement.
- 2) This is best done by moving the limb passively through the desired movement.
- 3) As the client attempts the movement, the therapist assists the limb through that movement as necessary.
- 4) The movement is repeated several times.

ii. Active resistive joint movements

Active resistive joint movements are several therapeutic techniques that improve mobility, flexibility, or strength, depending on how the technique is performed.

a) Application

As the name indicates, active resistive joint movements involve a movement made by the client that is in some way resisted by the practitioner.

b) Use

The type and degree of the movement, the extent and direction of the resistance, the duration of the resistance, and the sequence of the actions all have an effect on the outcome of the procedure.

c) Shoulder application

- 1) To perform active resistive joint movements to shoulder flexion, instruct the client on the movement by passively moving the arm from a neutral position next to the side to a position high over the head.
- 2) Instruct the client to repeat the movement on your command.
- 3) Place one hand on the wrist and the other just above the elbow.
- 4) Instruct the client to move the arm.
- 5) Resist the client's movement, but allow the movement to take place.
- 6) Repeat the movement several times, resisting a little more each time but always allowing the full movement to take place.

d) Function

This type of movement builds strength in the specific muscle groups being challenged.

e) Target

Active resistive joint movements can target any muscle group in the body.

f) Benefit

Joint movements are used to help restore a client's mobility or increase flexibility in a joint.

g) Passive and active joint movements are often combined.

1) Example

- i. To restore some mobility to a shoulder joint, the client is instructed to raise the arm to the point of discomfort (active unassisted movement).
- ii. The therapist holds the arm in that position while the client is instructed to push against the therapist and attempt to continue the movement (active resistive joint movement).
- iii. The client then is instructed to relax as the therapist continues to move the client's arm without help or effort from the client (passive joint movement).



Demonstrate the active joint movements.

4. Barriers that limit ROM

Joint movements are most beneficial when performed through the full physiologic range of motion.

- a. Types of barriers
 - i. All joints have normal restrictions or barriers that limit the range of motion.
 - ii. These barriers can be classified as anatomic, physiologic, or pathologic.
 - iii. Barriers can be altered by illness, injury, or surgery.
- b. Anatomic barriers

Anatomic barriers limit movement because of the physical structure of the joint.

 - i. Caution

Moving beyond an anatomic barrier can result in damage to the tissues involved.
- c. Physiologic barrier

The physiologic barrier is encountered at the anatomic barrier but usually before it is reached.

 - i. Bone-to-bone

The physiologic barrier can be due to bone-to-bone contact, such as the extension of the elbow where the movement is stopped when the olecranon process of the ulna contacts the humerus.
 - ii. Soft tissue

In healthy tissue, the physiologic barrier is usually due to soft tissue, either muscle or ligaments, limiting the movement at the end of a normal ROM.
 - iii. Causes
 - a) The barrier can be due to soft tissue approximation, such as flexion of the elbow where the biceps presses against the forearm, restricting further movement.
 - b) Sometimes the restriction is due to pull on the ligaments, as in the hyperextension of the hip.
 - c) Most often, however, it is due to the pull of muscles that have reached the extent of their possible stretch.
- d. Pathologic barrier

The pathologic barrier is similar to the physiologic barrier, but it occurs either before the normal end of the range of motion is achieved or is accompanied by pain or discomfort that restricts the movement of that joint.

 - i. Examples

Tense muscles, injured or scarred tissues, inflammation, or other pathologic conditions can restrict range of motion.
 - ii. Application

When a therapist is performing joint movements on a client, the limb or joint should move easily and painlessly within its physiologic range of motion.
 - iii. Range of motion

It is beneficial if the practitioner is familiar with the normal ROM for the major synovial joints in the body.
 - iv. Varies
 - a) Keep in mind that normal ROM varies from person to person.
 - b) As the practitioner moves a joint so that it approaches its physiologic barrier, the quality of the movement changes.
 - c) The change in the quality of movement from the first sense of resistance to the extent of the physiologic or anatomic barrier is called **end feel**.
- e. End feel
 - i. Hard end feel

Hard end feel is end feel that results in bone-on-bone contact, such as the extension of the elbow.
 - ii. Soft end feel

Soft end feel is gradual tightening and springiness in the last few inches of the ROM owing to the soft tissue's approaching the extent of its possible stretch.

- iii. Restriction
 - On occasion, normal ROM is restricted by muscle spasm or other conditions that cause pain during the movement.
- iv. **Empty end feel**
 - Empty end feel is an abrupt restriction to a joint movement before reaching the physiologic barrier (due to pain).
- f. End feel (continued)
 - Joint movements have great therapeutic benefit as an assessment tool and as a treatment to enhance function and mobility.
 - i. Caution
 - The practitioner must be aware of the end feel of the joints and the client's reactions when doing joint movements.
 - ii. Normal function
 - Hard or soft end feel, without pain and encountered at the physiologic barrier, indicates normal function of healthy tissue.
 - iii. Abnormal function
 - a) Encountering a hard end feel before the normal physiologic barrier or a painful empty end feel indicates abnormal function.
 - b) A soft end feel encountered before the normal physiologic barrier could indicate restrictions in the muscle's fascia or a neuromuscular guarding, shortening the functional length of an associated muscle.
 - iv. Application
 - When a client exhibits restricted movement in certain joints, the practitioner can apply specific techniques or movement to increase joint mobility. See **Figures 10-81 to 10-88** on pages 386 and 387 of the student textbook.
 - v. Use
 - Joint movements are used extensively in soft tissue modalities such as proprioceptive neuromuscular facilitation (PNF), PNF stretching, muscle energy technique (MET), and position release. (These modalities are discussed in more detail in Chapter 15, Clinical Massage Techniques.)



ENGAGE: Refer to Activity #4.

- 5. Effects and benefits of joint movements
 - Passive and active joint movements have beneficial effects on the joint and the soft tissues associated with the joint.
 - a. Most joint movements are applied to synovial joints.
 - b. Depending on how they are applied, joint movements do the following:
 - i. Promote relaxation of the related muscles
 - ii. Warm and lubricate the articulating surfaces within the joint capsule and stimulate the production of synovial fluid
 - iii. Affect the proprioceptors and mechanoreceptors in the tissues surrounding the joint and in the associated muscles by manipulating the articulation through its full range of motion and introducing the limb to the possibility of new movement
 - iv. Provide stretch to the fascia of the associated muscles
 - v. Flex, stretch, and warm tendons and ligaments to become more pliable
 - vi. Help maintain or increase flexibility and range of motion
 - vii. Stimulate fluid movement because of the movement of the muscles

Summary and Review

- ✦ There are many types of massage manipulations and possible combinations of strokes, so a massage can be tailored to the specific needs of each client.
- ✦ Nearly all styles of massage consist of the practitioner's hands, arms, or feet contacting the client's body in such a way that the tissues are deformed, resulting in a therapeutic effect.
- ✦ The common massage methods include static, gliding, torsion, shearing, oscillating, percussive, and joint movement.
- ✦ Each method of massage utilizes strokes intended to elicit specific effects.
- ✦ The practice of massage becomes scientific only when the practitioner recognizes the purpose and effects of each movement and adapts the treatment to the client's condition for the desired results.
- ✦ The manner in which massage strokes are applied determines the effect they have on the client.



Chapter Review Questions and Answers

Note: The answer to the review questions can be found on the page(s) of Theory & Practice of Therapeutic Massage indicated in the reference note after each question.

1. Name seven basic classifications of methods used in massage.

Answer: The seven basic classifications of massage methods are static, gliding, torsion, shearing, oscillating, percussive, and joint movements. [Reference: pg. 358]

2. What are four external forces that deform body tissues?

Answer: Deformed body tissues can be categorized from among four external forces: compressive forces, tensile or tension forces, twisting or torsion forces, and shearing forces. [Reference: pg. 356]

3. Which massage techniques are considered torsion methods?

Answer: Torsion methods include kneading or petrissage, fulling, skin rolling, and wringing. [Reference: pg. 359]

4. Which massage techniques are considered shearing methods?

Answer: Shearing methods include superficial friction, circular friction, cross-fiber friction, rolling, chucking, and compression. [Reference: pg. 360]

5. In which direction is massage generally applied?

Answer: Massage is generally applied in a centripetal direction, or toward the heart. [Reference: pgs. 368, 370]

6. How are massage movements directed away from the heart?

Answer: Massage strokes directed away from the heart should be light enough that they do not affect fluid flow. [Reference: pg. 370]

7. What is the approximate duration of a full-body massage?

Answer: The approximate duration of a full-body massage is about one hour. [Reference: pg. 363]

8. In terms of a massage technique, what is touch?

Answer: In massage technique, touch is the stationary contact of the practitioner's hand and the client's body. [Reference: pg. 364]

9. How is light touch administered, and what are its effects?

Answer: Light or superficial touch is purposeful contact in which the natural and evenly distributed weight of the practitioner's finger, fingers, or hand is applied on a given area of the client's body. The main objective of light touch is to soothe and provide a comforting connection that is calming and allows the powerful healing mechanisms of the body to function. Touch is effective in reducing pain, lowering blood pressure, controlling nervous irritability, or reassuring a nervous, tense client. [Reference: pg. 365]

10. How is deep touch given, and when is it used?

Answer: Deep touch is performed with one finger, thumb, several fingers, the entire hand, the forearm, or the elbow. The heel of the hand, knuckles, or elbow can be used according to desired results. Deep touch is used when calming, anesthetizing, or stimulating effects are desired. Deep pressure is useful in soothing muscle spasms and relieving pain at reflex areas, stress points in tendons, and trigger points in muscle. [Reference: pg. 365]

11. How is aura gliding performed?

Answer: Aura gliding is done with long, smooth strokes, where the practitioner's hands glide the length of the client's entire body or body part, coming very close to but not actually touching the body surface. [Reference: pg. 367]

12. What is another name for feather gliding, and how is it used?

Answer: Another name for feather gliding is nerve strokes. These are usually used as the final stroke to the individual areas of the body. [Reference: pg. 367]

13. What is effleurage?

Answer: *Gliding* is the term now used in place of effleurage. *Gliding* is the term describing a succession of strokes applied by gliding the hand over a somewhat extended portion of the body. [Reference: pg. 367]

14. Which kind of gliding requires the lightest possible touch?

Answer: Superficial gliding requires the lightest possible touch. [Reference: pgs. 365, 368]

15. Which kind of gliding requires firm pressure?

Answer: Deep gliding strokes require firm pressure. [Reference: pgs. 367-368]

16. What are the benefits of superficial gliding strokes?

Answer: Superficial gliding strokes produce soothing effects and overcome tiredness or restlessness. Superficial gliding strokes accustom the client to the practitioner's contact and allow the practitioner to assess the body area being massaged. [Reference: pg. 368]

17. What are the benefits of deep gliding strokes?

Answer: Deep gliding strokes have a stretching and broadening effect on muscle tissue and fascia. They also enhance and stimulate the venous blood flow. [Reference: pgs. 368-371]

18. How is the kneading movement applied in massage?

Answer: Kneading movements are applied by grasping muscular tissue with one or both hands and then lifted, squeezed, rolled, kneaded and twisted with a firm pressure. [Reference: pg. 372]

19. What are the benefits of kneading?

Answer: Kneading enhances the local fluid movement, mechanically loosens and softens superficial tissue, reduces adhesions, improves muscle tone, and reduces muscle atrophy. [Reference: pg. 372]

20. What classical term has the same meaning as kneading?
Answer: The classical term that means the same as kneading is *petrissage*. [Reference: pgs. 367, 372]
21. For what part of the body is the fulling movement recommended?
Answer: Fulling is recommended for the muscular areas of the arms and legs. [Reference: pgs. 372-373]
22. What is the proper way to apply friction movements to the body?
Answer: Friction movements are applied to the body by moving more superficial layers of flesh against the deeper tissues to flatten, broaden, or stretch the tissue. [Reference: pg. 375]
23. What are the effects of friction on the connective tissue?
Answer: Moving one layer of tissue against another produces heat in the skin and superficial tissues. Friction movements break down connective tissue adhesions and increases pliability of the tissues. [Reference: pgs. 375, 377]
24. How is cross-fiber friction applied?
Answer: Cross-fiber friction uses short, deep strokes transverse to the direction of muscle, tendon, or ligament fibers. The fingers do not move over the skin but move the skin and superficial tissues across the target tissue. [Reference: pgs. 376-377]
25. In what manner are compression movements applied to the body?
Answer: Compression movements are rhythmic pressing movements directed into muscle tissue perpendicular to the body part by either the hand or fist. [Reference: pg. 378]
26. What are the benefits of compression movements?
Answer: Compression movement invigorates the body, enhances local fluid movement, causes hyperemia. Compression movements cause increased circulation and a lasting hyperemia in the tissue. [Reference: pg. 378]
27. What is the proper way to apply vibratory movements to the body?
Answer: Vibratory movements are applied with a continuous shaking or trembling movement by means of the practitioner's hands or an electrical vibrator. [Reference: pgs. 378-381]
28. What is a safe rate of vibration?
Answer: Vibration is safe at a rate of 5 to 10 times per second by hand or 10 to 100 times per second by electrical vibrators. [Reference: pg. 379]
29. How can the practitioner control the effects produced by vibratory movements?
Answer: The practitioner can control the effects of vibratory movements by controlling the rate of vibration, intensity of pressure, and duration of treatment. [Reference: pg. 381]
30. What is the proper way to apply percussion methods to the body?
Answer: Percussion methods are applied with quick striking movements performed with both hands simultaneously or alternately. [Reference: pg. 381]
31. Name the forms of percussion methods.
Answer: Percussion methods include slapping, beating, hacking, cupping, and tapping. [Reference: pg. 381]

32. What are the benefits of percussion methods?
Answer: Initially, the effect of percussion is stimulating. Prolonged application encourages relaxation. Prolonged applications have an anesthetic effect on some nerve endings. Deeper applications cause vasodilation and increased circulation. Cupping aids in breaking up lung congestion. [Reference: pg. 383]
33. To which parts of the body can joint movements be applied?
Answer: Joint movements can be used to manipulate any joint in the body, including joints of the toes, knees, hips, arms, the vertebrae, or even the less movable joints of the pelvis and cranium. [Reference: pg. 383]
34. Name two types of joint movements.
Answer: Two types of joint movements are active joint movements and passive joint movements. [Reference: pg. 383]
35. Describe the difference between active assistive joint movements and active resistive joint movements.
Answer: During an active assistive joint movement, the client is instructed to perform a motion at the same time the practitioner assists the movement. During an active resistive movement, the client is instructed to make a motion while the limb is held to resist movement. [Reference: pgs. 383-384]
36. What is range of motion?
Answer: Range of motion (ROM) is the movement of a joint from one extreme of the articulation to the other. [Reference: pg. 385]
37. Define end feel.
Answer: *End feel* is the change in the quality of the feeling the therapist senses as the end of a joint movement is approached. [Reference: pg. 385]
38. How is pressure regulated during a massage?
Answer: Pressure is regulated during a massage according to the technique used and according to the intended outcome. The rule is to begin with a light and sensitive touch, increase the pressure as you work into an area, and then gradually reduce pressure as you leave the area. [Reference: pg. 363]
39. What is the significance of a pain threshold in the practice of massage?
Answer: A person's pain threshold is the amount of discomfort or pain that can be tolerated without adverse reactions. When the pain threshold is violated, the client tenses up and the massage work becomes less effective or can even be counterproductive. [Reference: pgs. 363-364]



Learning Reinforcement Ideas and Activities

1. Have students complete Chapter 10 in *Theory & Practice of Therapeutic Massage, 6th Ed. Workbook*.
2. Have students read Chapter 11 in *Theory & Practice of Therapeutic Massage, 6th Ed. text*.
3. Have students practice different massage strokes and log each session. Let students rate each other on how they performed and feedback on how they can improve.
4. Have students practice each type of massage stroke on various parts of the body with different points of contact (hands, fingers, forearms, etc.). Have students expand their practice once they have learned proper body mechanics and draping techniques (which will be right around the corner in this course and appears in the next few chapters).
5. Record any activities, assignments, or ideas that have been used effectively with this lesson in order to aid other instructors who may use this lesson plan in the future.