

Contraindications & Precautions - For Massage Therapy

Contraindication means: something (as a symptom or condition) that makes a particular treatment or procedure inadvisable

Absolute, General Contraindication – meaning, not at all.

Absolute, Local Contraindication – meaning, not directly on the affected area.

Precautions, General – Meaning, massage requires treatment modifications, Doctors consult may be needed/required.

Precautions, Local – Massage requires treatment modifications to area.

The following is a list of the contraindications and precautions regarding massage therapy. Therapists employed at the Shift Center are kept current on what conditions constitute contraindications or precautions as some of them change with the growing knowledge of the effects of massage therapy.

If you are unsure about your condition, talk to your therapist.

Absolute, General Contraindications - Massage therapy is not appropriate for the following:

- Acute conditions requiring medical attention such as anaphylaxis, appendicitis, cerebrovascular accident (CVA), diabetic coma, insulin shock, epileptic seizure, myocardial infarction (MI), pneumothorax, atelectasis, sever asthmatic attack, status asthmatic's or syncope
- Acute pneumonia
- Advanced kidney, respiratory or liver failure (*a modified treatment may be possible with a physician's consent*)
- Diabetes with complications such as gangrene, advanced heart or kidney disease or very unstable or high blood pressure
- Eclampsia
- Fever of 38.5°C (101.0°F) or above
- Hemophilia
- Hemorrhage
- Post CVA or post MI where the condition is not yet stable
- Severe atherosclerosis
- Severe and unstable hypertension
- Shock
- Some highly metastatic cancers not judged terminal
- Systemic contagious or infectious condition



Absolute, Local Contraindications - Massage is not appropriate directly in the affected area with the following conditions:

- Acute flare-up of inflammatory arthritis
- Acute neuritis
- Aneurysms deemed life-threatening (may be general contraindication depending on location)
- Ectopic pregnancy
- Esophageal varicosities
- Frostbite
- Local contagious condition
- Local irritable skin condition
- Malignancy
- Open wound or sore
- Phlebitis, phlebothrombosis or arteritis (may be general contraindication depending on location)
- Recent burn
- Sepsis
- Temporal arteritis
- 24 to 48 hours post any anti-inflammatory injection
- Undiagnosed lump

Precautions, General – *Meaning, massage requires treatment modifications, Doctors consult may be needed/required.*

- Any condition of spasticity or rigidity
- Asthma
- Cancer
- Chronic congestive heart failure
- Chronic kidney disease
- Client is immunosuppressed
- Coma (may be a general contraindication depending on the cause)
- Diagnosed atherosclerosis
- Drug withdrawal



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cont. - **Precautions, General** – Meaning, massage requires treatment modifications, Doctors consult may be needed/required.

- Epilepsy
- Emphysema
- Hypertension
- Inflammatory arthritis
- Major or abdominal surgery
- Medication use by the client that alters sensation, muscle tone, standard reflex reactions, cardiovascular function, kidney/liver function or personality
- Moderately severe diabetes or juvenile onset diabetes
- Multiple sclerosis
- Osteoporosis, osteomalacia
- Pregnancy and labor
- Post CVI or post MI
- Recent head injury

Precautions, Local – Massage requires treatment modifications to area.

- Acute disc herniation
- Aneurysm (may be general contraindication depending on location)
- Acute inflammatory condition
- Any anti-inflammatory injection site
- Chronic or long-standing thrombosis
- Buerger's Disease (may be general contraindication depending on location)
- Chronic arthritic condition
- Chronic abdominal or digestive disease
- Chronic diarrhea
- Contusion
- Endometriosis
- Flaccid paralysis or paresis
- Fracture while casted and post cast removal
- Hernia
- Joint instability or hypermobility
- Kidney infection or kidney stones



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cont. **Precautions, Local** – *Massage requires treatment modifications to area.*

- Mastitis
- Minor surgery
- Pelvic inflammatory disease
- Pitting edema
- Portal hypertension
- Prolonged constipation
- Recent abortion
- Recent vaginal birth
- Trigeminal neuralgia



Make sure if you have any health conditions that your massage therapist has graduated from a school that is approved by the Board of Healing Arts in your state or an accredited Massage Program, with a minimum 500 hour curriculum. Most states require 500 minimum hours and some states require up to 1500 hours of training.

Kansas currently has no regulations for this profession, this means anyone can do massage with some or no training.

Some therapists are certified, this can mean they many different things.

Certification from a weekend class.

Certification from a vocational training seminar, or online video course.

Certification from an accredited school with minimum requirements of 500 hours

Certification from the National Board (NCBTMB), minimum requirements of 750 hours

Please make sure you ask questions:

How many hours of training have you had? What school did you attend? Do you have specialized training with my issue? Are you insured – by whom?

Here are several links to help you in your search.

<http://www.massagetherapy.com/find/index.php>

<http://www.ncbtmb.org/tools/find-a-certified-massage-therapist>

<http://www.amtamassage.org/findamassage/index.html>