

AYURVEDIC SELF-MASSAGE

Massage Yourself with Nourishment and Love!

Massage has been used for centuries in a variety of traditional cultures to strengthen well-being and vitality. Abhyanga, the term used to describe an Ayurvedic oil massage, is recommended for almost everybody of any age, from a newborn child to an elderly person. In Sanskrit, the word "sneha" can be translated as both "oil" and "love." Both oil and love provide a sense of nurturing, grounding, and nourishment. Try doing this simple routine in the morning for a strong start to your day or before bed for a more restful sleep.

BENEFITS OF AYURVEDIC SELF-MASSAGE

- Imparts softness, strength, and color to the body
 - Decreases the effects of aging
 - Nourishes the body
 - Benefits sleep patterns
- Imparts tone and vigor to the dhatus (tissues) of the body
- Stimulates the internal organs of the body, increasing circulation
 - Using rough strokes and doing a dry massage with minimal oil pacifying for kapha.

THE TECHNIQUE

Choose an oil that is appropriate for your doshic type.

1. Put about 1/4-1/2 cup of oil in an 8 oz. squeeze bottle.
2. Warm the oil by placing the bottle in a mug of hot water.
3. Massage the oil into your entire body, beginning at your extremities and working toward the middle of your body. Use long strokes on the limbs and circular strokes on the joints.
4. Massage the abdomen and chest in broad, circular motions. On the abdomen, follow the path of the large intestine, massaging clockwise, moving up on the right side of the abdomen, then across, then down on the left side.
5. Put a couple drops of warm oil on the tip of your little finger or on a cotton ball and apply to the opening of the ear canal.
6. If you are able, take your time with this process. Spend up to 20 minutes massaging the muscles and working the oil deep into the skin.
7. Enjoy a warm bath or shower. Minimize the use of soap, and use only where needed.
8. Avoid doing Ayurvedic self-massage during menstruation or while ill.