

Self-Care Society Contraindication Policy

A contraindication is a medical condition that may **prevent** or **restrict** a Clients massage therapy session taking place.

A contraindication is generally due to one or two things;

- 1 . There is a health risk to the client
- 2 . There is a risk of cross-infection to the Individual, Therapist or other Clients

Whilst it is not a legal requirement to work within contraindication guidelines, it does cross ethical boundaries and violates the insurance the business operates under.

Failure to declare a contraindication puts both you, the client and I, the business owner at risk of harm.

If you commence massage therapy and later develop a contraindication in the following sessions, your massage therapy sessions may need to cease until the contraindication has cleared or you receive GP approval & sign an indemnity waiver, depending on the condition.

Please see the contraindication list below.

Contraindications list

Fever > 37.8c

Fever generally occurs in response to the body fighting off an infection and is a vital immune system response. Massage however can place too much strain on the body systems when a fever is present. There is also a risk of infection transmission to the therapist and other clients.

Feeling nauseous or experiencing vomiting and/or diarrhea

Nausea, vomiting and diarrhea can cause the body to become dehydrated and is typically a sign of infection or early pregnancy. Massage can only take place once symptoms have ceased for 48 hours or more, or pregnancy has been ruled out.

First trimester of pregnancy

Massage therapy should not be carried out within the first 12 weeks of pregnancy due to the increased risk of miscarriage. Massage therapy is safe for pregnant Women only when carried out by an appropriately qualified Massage Therapist. As Self-Care Society is not qualified in pregnancy massage, It would be unethical to treat you and may put public liability insurance at risk.

Has had an accident, injury or surgery within the last 6 weeks (3-6 months if major)

It is important to give the body a chance to heal naturally without third party intervention. As there may be damage to tendons, ligaments and muscles that can be made worse if not treated with due care and consideration. Light self-massage techniques can be prescribed until such a time that a professional clinical massage can take place.

Acute infectious and contagious diseases

Any bacterial, viral or fungal infection of the client or Therapist contraindicates treatment. This includes conditions such as: scabies; impetigo; ringworm; shingles; measles; pediculosis; tuberculosis; hepatitis; influenza/COVID-19; headlice; severe conjunctivitis.

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Contraindications list

Oedema (medical)

An accumulation of lymph fluid in the body can be indicative of a variety of dangerous medical conditions. GP advice is advised and a signed indemnity waiver is required.

Localised swelling or inflammation

Swelling and inflammation is characterised by: heat; pain; redness; swelling & loss of function. Can be indicative of infection but similarly some conditions can cause swelling and inflammation in the joints (arthritis/osteoporosis), for which massage is recommended.

Recent whiplash injury

Neck & shoulder areas should be avoided from 6 weeks up to 3 months, depending on the extent of hyperextension. Signed indemnity waiver following a full consultation is required.

Slipped disc - prolapsed or herniated disc

Prolapsed and herniated discs can be excruciatingly painful to live with. Before commencing massage therapy, you must first have a formal diagnosis from your GP, Chiropractor or Osteopath and sign a waiver.

Undiagnosed lumps, bumps and swellings

It is vitally important to have any new L,B&S checked by your GP and undergo a process of investigation, if required. If your Therapist identifies a LBS, this will be communicated to you alongside any other findings. It is then the Clients responsibility to seek the opinion of their Physician.

Severe eczema or psoriasis

Contraindicated if the skin is weeping due to risk of aggravating the condition and causing infection to the affected area. If the affected area is a limb (hand or foot), treatment can go ahead as long as the area is covered and not worked on during the session.

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Contraindications list

Migraine

Treatment during the prodrome phase of a migraine and the migraine itself is contraindicated. Due to the increased speed of the circulatory system, massage therapy is only likely to intensify migraine symptoms. It is safe to undergo massage therapy at the end of an attack.

Undiagnosed pain

Massage Therapists are not diagnosticians. If you are suffering from chronic pain which has been causing concern and does not seem muscular in origin, you must seek advice and investigation from your GP. If your pain is linked to an undiagnosed cancer, for example, massage therapy can increase the risk of that cancer spreading. This is a vitally important contraindication.

Early stages of cancer

Due to the effects of massage on the circulatory and lymphatic systems, cancer cells can 'metastasize' (spread) to other parts of the body.

A massage therapist should not treat cancer patients unless they hold a valid CPD qualification in Oncology massage. Unfortunately Self-Care Society is not appropriately qualified in this field and therefore it would be highly unethical to treat you and may compromise public liability insurance.

Epilepsy

Due to the effects of massage on the circulatory system, treatment may cause seizures to occur. GP consent is required alongside a completed indemnity waiver. Sufferers of epilepsy who experience tonic-clonic seizures, or those at risk of sudden death syndrome (SDS), cannot undergo massage therapy treatment.

Severe sunburn

The skin is hypersensitive to touch when burned and therefore massage is contraindicated until the skin has fully healed.

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Contraindications list

Hernia

When an organ protrudes through weak muscular structures or surrounding tissues. An indemnity form must be completed following a full consultation and in some cases GP approval may be required.

Motor Neuron Disease

MND is a rapidly progressive neurological disorder which attacks the nerves that control movement and other important functions such as breathing/swallowing, gripping, walking and speaking. Not enough research has been conducted to assess the impact of massage therapy on a client with MND. Therefore written GP approval and a signed indemnity waiver are required before the first session.

Multiple Sclerosis

MS is a condition that affects the brain and spinal cord. Impacts on sufferers vary greatly from mild and manageable symptoms to complete disablement, depending on the type of MS. Whilst studies have shown promising insights into the benefits massage therapy holds for MS patients, GP approval and a signed indemnity waiver are required before the first session.

Sciatica

Sciatica is caused by compression of the sciatic nerve as it exits the spine into the glutes. The nerves become irritated and inflamed causing pain to radiate through the buttocks and thighs. Massage therapy can be highly effective in treating sciatic pain, however some techniques used can cause mild to moderate discomfort in the affected area, effects of which can last up to several days following your session. A completed indemnity form is therefore required.

Diabetes

Diabetics may suffer from a range of symptoms including loss of tactile sensation. If this symptom presents itself, massage is unfortunately unable to be carried out due to the client's inability to gauge pressure or pain levels. Additionally, due to massage effects on the circulatory system, there is an increased risk of having a 'hypo'. In some cases massage can go ahead with written GP consent and a completed indemnity waiver following the client's informed consent.

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Contraindications list

Meningitis

Meningitis is inflammation of the connective tissue surrounding the brain and spinal column, and is highly contagious. Massage is contraindicated.

Muscular Spasticity

Muscular spasticity is characterised by muscle stiffness, contractions or involuntary spasms and is typically associated with the nervous system and is a symptom of MS (Multiple sclerosis). Muscular spasticity can be an uncomfortable and painful and may result in increased pain sensitivity. A signed indemnity waiver is required before the first session.

Under the influence of alcohol or recreational drugs

The increased speed of the circulatory system can exacerbate the effects of drugs and alcohol on the body and put the liver & kidneys under strain. Massage is contraindicated.

Bells Palsy

Paralysis of the facial muscles following skull injury, stroke or infection. GP approval must be provided and an indemnity form completed if the affected area is to be worked on.

Neuritis / Idiopathic neuropathy /uncontrolled neuropathic pain

Neuritis is inflammation of a nerve - contraindicated due to risk of elevation in pain levels. Uncontrolled or unknown (idiopathic) neuropathy (nerve pain) can be experienced all over the body, or in specific acute locations. A full consultation will determine if a potential Client is contraindicated, however in cases where treatment goes ahead, a signed indemnity waiver is required.

Kidney infections/disorders

If the kidneys are not functioning correctly, massage and stimulated lymphatic flow can place more strain on the kidneys and exacerbate symptoms. Massage is contraindicated until the condition has cleared.

For further information email
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