

Body Wraps

Chapter Outline

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SPA FUSION
INTEGRATION OF SKILLS

STUDY TIP: Catchwords

SPA INSPIRATION: Mix and Match

GOOD TO KNOW: Sample Sizes

CHAPTER WRAP-UP

Key Terms

Claustrophobia: The fear of being enclosed in narrow spaces.

Cryogenic product: A product that cools the body area to which it is applied.

Emollient: A substance that softens the skin by slowing the evaporation of water.

Fomentek: A type of water bottle that is designed to lie flat on the massage table.

Interferons: A protein secreted by some cells that protects them (and other cells) from viral infection.

Poultice: Usually a cloth filled with heated herbs, clay, or a medicated product spread on a cloth and applied to wounds or an injury.

Body wraps could be considered as the earliest known spa treatment. The ancient Egyptians were using a body wrap when they embalmed bodies using herbs, resins, and spices. This practice preserved body tissues and prevented degradation and decay. Emollient wraps in modern-day spas have the same aim: to fortify the skin and prevent premature aging. Many soft tissue conditions can benefit from wraps aimed at decreasing muscular tension, stimulating local circulation to the muscles, or by simply relaxing the body and providing time for reflection. Today, a wide variety of body wraps are used for cosmetic purposes or to treat conditions such as low energy, stress, low immunity, fatigue, and muscular aches and pains.

There are numerous ways to perform a body wrap, and as with any spa treatment, you can mix and match methods to best meet the treatment goals you have determined with the client. It is helpful to understand three different wrapping procedures: the hot sheet wrap, the “cocoon,” and the tension wrap. It is important to point out that the words *hot sheet wrap* and *cocoon* are used to differentiate two distinct procedures. This is a device to provide clarity and not meant to suggest that the word *wrap* always means a hot sheet wrap, whereas the word *cocoon* always means that the

product is applied directly to the body. You can use a variety of words to describe your body wrap services in an enticing manner for clients.

The types of products that might be used in a hot sheet wrap or cocoon are limited only by your imagination. Table 9-1 gives a brief description of some different treatments that are currently offered at spas. Table 9-2 provides an overview of some of the products that might be used with each type of wrap. As you can see, the products are often the same. The difference is in the way the product is prepared and the method used to wrap the client.

Before delivering the treatments described in this chapter, you may wish to review basic earlier chapters to ensure your draping, product application, and dry room product removal skills are solid. See Appendix A (Sample Treatments) at the end of the book for body wrap samples including promotional descriptions and product suggestions.

General Treatment Considerations

Before delivering any type of body wrap, perform a careful pretreatment health intake process to rule out any

TABLE 9-1 Sample Body Wrap Treatments

SPA	TREATMENT NAME	TREATMENT DESCRIPTION
Double Eagle Resort and Spa, June Lake, CA ⁵	DeVine Grapeseed Mud Therm	In this treatment, the body is dry brushed before grape seed–enriched mud is layered on the skin. This spa uses a piece of equipment called a Hydro Therm to enhance their service. The Hydro Therm is a combined steam cabinet and Vichy shower. The mud is steamed to facilitate product absorption, and then the Vichy shower rinses the mud away. The treatment concludes with the application of a grapeseed lotion.
Sonnenalp Resort, Vail, CO ⁶	Swiss Paraffin Dip	This service begins with a dry brush treatment and is followed by the application of body milk (light lotion). The paraffin is layered over the body milk, and then the client is wrapped in thermal blankets.
Chateau Elan at St. Andrews Bay, Scotland ⁷	Papaya A Peel	The Papaya A Peel begins with an exfoliation that uses Caribbean Sea sand and freshly mashed papaya. The body is then wrapped in a combination of coconut and yogurt.
Grand Geneva Resort and Spa, Lake Geneva, WI ⁸	Ocean Essence Body Wrap	This wrap uses a seawater gel that is warmed and mixed with essential oils of lavender, ylang ylang, sandalwood, basil, and sage. The service ends with a 30-minute massage.
Lake Austin Spa Resort, Austin, TX ⁹	Babassu Butter Wrap	In this 40-minute treatment, the client receives an aromatherapy steam, followed by a sugar exfoliation. Babassu butter (<i>Orbignya phalerata</i>) from the Amazon is applied to the skin before the body is wrapped. A face and scalp massage complete the service.
Lake Tahoe Resort and Spa, Incline Village, NV ¹⁰	Mountain Rain Herbal Wrap	This treatment consists of a classic herbal hot sheet wrap and aromatherapy massage.

TABLE 9-2 Hot Sheet Wraps and Cocoons

HOT SHEET WRAPS			COCOONS		
Herbal	Coffee	Seaweed	Emollient	Aloe	Essential oil
Mud	Clay	Peat	Paraffin	Vitamin	Seaweed
Milk	Honey	Cider	Mud	Clay	Peat
Juice	Other		Mint	Cryogenic	Other
INDICATIONS FOR HOT SHEET WRAPS			INDICATIONS FOR COCOONS		
Detoxifying	Slimming	Firming	Detoxifying	Slimming	Firming
Cellulite	Skin focus	Sore muscle	Cellulite	Skin focus	Sore muscle
Revitalizing	Immune boosting	Weight loss	Relaxing	Revitalizing	Immune boosting

conditions that contraindicate the use of a body wrap. You also want to be prepared for some of the problems that might arise during this particular type of spa treatment.

Contraindications

Very hot wraps, very cold wraps, or wraps that might cause intense detoxification systems should not be used on children; the elderly; pregnant women; or those with a heart condition, high blood pressure, diabetes, fibromyalgia, rheumatoid arthritis, on people taking multiple medications, or are contraindicated for massage. Hot wraps are contraindicated for people that have recently been in a car accident or suffered a soft tissue injury. With wraps that use hot or cold temperature extremes, check that the client does not have any nerve damage that may interfere with his or her ability to sense hot or cold. These types of wraps increase the load on the cardiovascular system and kidneys and may aggravate an existing condition. For example, clients with impaired circulation or those with advanced or poorly treated diabetes should not receive hot or cold wraps. Tension wraps are contraindicated for individuals with spider veins, varicose veins or weakened veins or arteries, or poor circulation.

Healing Crisis

Wraps may trigger detoxification symptoms such as headache and nausea. It is normal for a client to experience mild detoxification symptoms. However, if the symptoms are intense or if they occur during the wrap itself, remove the client from the wrap, encourage him or her to drink water, and to rest at a comfortable temperature. If the client's symptoms persist after he or she is unwrapped or if symptoms get worse rapidly, the client could be in danger, and you should consult a physician or call the emergency services.

Allergies or Sensitive Skin

Check that clients do not have allergies to herbs, essential oils, iodine in seaweed, or other ingredients in products, es-

pecially with hot sheet wraps. Heat increases the irritation potential of any product being applied to the skin. Individuals with sensitive or thin skin will often experience skin irritation with hot sheet wraps and are more likely to enjoy cocoons (which are not so hot and aggressive).

Modesty

During a hot sheet wrap, the client should be wearing disposable undergarments or an old swimsuit so that he or she is always covered. During the wrap procedure, clients lie down on top of the hot sheet quickly after it has been unfolded by the therapist. To maintain their modesty, they will wear the robe over the undergarments up until the moment they get onto the treatment table.

When the Wrap Goes Wrong

Like any spa treatment, hot sheet wraps, cocoons, and tension wraps require practice, but even experienced therapists have days when the wrap goes wrong. For example, if you cut the plastic sheeting too short, you may try to wrap it around the client and find that you have a gap. The best practice in this case is to cover the gap with two bath towels and keep going with the treatment. If the hot sheet wrap turns cold before the client is wrapped, continue to wrap the client and then place a hot pack under the client's feet and turn the heat up in the treatment room as high as possible. If the hot sheet wrap is so cold that the client is uncomfortable, you have two options. The first is to start again by reheating the wrap sheet and the client. The second is to offer an alternative treatment and give the client a gift certificate.

Claustrophobia

Even clients who have no previous experience with **claustrophobia** can become anxious or panic-stricken when wrapped up as tightly as they are in a hot wrap or cocoon. It is recommended that the therapist remains with the client at all times so that he or she can remove the wrapping if

the client becomes anxious. Watch for signs of distress such as rapid breathing or a concerned expression on the client's face. As a compromise, the client can be wrapped with his or her arms outside the sheets and blankets, but this will result in heat loss, which may reduce the effectiveness of the wrap. Place a loose blanket over the client's arms to minimize heat loss.

Wrapping Materials

For the hot sheet wrap procedure, you can choose to use two wrap sheets (both cotton, cotton and linen, cotton and muslin, or cotton and fleece) or a wrap sheet and a bath towel. A bath towel is handy because it can be unfolded very quickly, so it does not get cold before the client is wrapped in the outer layer of blankets. The only concern with the bath towel is that it is difficult to wring out completely, so it may have very hot pockets that could potentially burn the client. If a towel is used for the hot wrap, you may want to purchase cheap, very thin towels rather than thick plush towels. Thinner towels wring out more easily, so they are safer. Flannel sheets are also difficult to wring out completely, so their use is not advised.

The Hot Sheet Wrap

In a hot sheet wrap, the treatment product (herbs, coffee, milk, honey, seaweed, mud, etc.) is dissolved in hot water. Two sheets (or a sheet and a bath towel) are steeped in the dissolved product and then wrapped around the client. This method is often used for detoxification treatments or where the goal is to stimulate metabolism as part of a weight loss program, to decrease water retention, to decrease muscle soreness, or to boost immunity.

Hot sheet wraps elevate body temperature, creating an “artificial fever” that accelerates detoxification and decreases water retention through perspiration. Fevers commonly occur during infection and inflammation. They are part of a natural healing response that intensifies the production of **interferons**, inhibits the growth of some microbes, and speeds up chemical reactions involved in cell and tissue repair. Fever also increases the heart rate, which speeds up the delivery of white blood cells and oxygen to body tissues. At the same time, antibody production and T-cell proliferation increase, further boosting immunity. Despite the name, cold sheet wraps are hot wraps and create the same response in the body as a hot wrap. The cold sheet “shocks” the body, which tries to quickly warm itself. This burst of warming body heat gets trapped inside the heavy wrap materials, causing increased perspiration and detoxification. In a cold sheet wrap, the client should already be perspiring when he or she is wrapped in the ice-cold sheet. The client must be “preheated” in a sauna, hot shower, hot bath, hydrotherapy tub, steam cabinet, steam room, or by carrying out some sort of aerobic activity. If the client is not

hot enough when he or she is wrapped in the cold sheet, the body cannot usually get warm enough to perspire, so the purpose of the wrap is not achieved.

Hot Sheet Wrap Types

There are many different types of products that can be used in a hot sheet wrap procedure. Common hot sheet wraps include the herbal body wrap; coffee wrap; seaweed, mud, clay, or peat wrap; milk and honey wrap; and cider or juice wrap.

The Herbal Body Wrap

The herbal body wrap dates back to early medical practices in which herbs were applied to the body in a **poultice** to heal disease. Many ancient healing traditions, including those of the Romans, Chinese, Native Americans, and Indians, used herbs as medicine to decrease “toxins” or “evil humors” in the body. Today, these treatments are marketed to jump-start a diet, support an internal cleansing regime, decrease pain and stiffness in muscles, decrease water retention, aid in a weight loss program, slim the contours of the body, or rid the body of specific chemicals while breaking an addiction (e.g., nicotine).

In preparation for this service, the appropriate herbs are placed in a muslin bag and soaked in hot water (165°F) to make a strong tea. Usually, about 1 cup of dried herbs is used per treatment (steeped in approximately 16 quarts of water). Table 9-3 provides some combinations of herbs for different treatment goals. Premixed herbs are available from spa suppliers.

The Coffee Wrap

Coffee wraps have been used for some time in spa treatments to firm tissue and decrease water retention. Coffee has the same pH as the skin and is useful for evening out the skin's texture and tone. A study conducted at Rutgers University by Conney¹ found that caffeine lowers the risk of skin cancer in mice when it is applied topically. A second compound (epigallocatechin gallate [EGCG]) found in green tea was also tested. This study has prompted the use of coffee and green tea as ingredients in after-sun products.

In preparation for a coffee hot wrap, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of finely ground coffee is placed in a muslin bag and soaked in approximately 17 quarts of hot water for 20 minutes. For a coffee and green tea wrap, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup finely ground coffee and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of green tea leaves give good results.

The Seaweed, Mud, Clay, or Peat Hot Sheet Wrap

Seaweed powder, mud, clay, or peat can be dissolved in hot water and then used in a hot wrap procedure. Add 1 tbsp of powdered seaweed to approximately 17 quarts of hot water during the setup for a hot wrap. If mud, clay, or peat is used as the hot wrap product, 1 cup is dissolved in approximately 17 quarts of hot water (stronger concentrations can be used if desired). Before delivering a seaweed or mud treatment,

TABLE 9-3 Herbal Combinations for Hot Sheet Wraps

DETOXIFICATION	SORE MUSCLES AND JOINTS	SKIN SOOTHING	SLIMMING
Rosemary	Eucalyptus	Red clover	Juniper
Juniper	Juniper	Lavender	Lemon peel
Clove	Peppermint	Chamomile	Thyme
Allspice	Ginger root	Calendula petal	Fennel seeds
Ginger root	Clove	Oatmeal (powdered)	Ginger root
Echinacea	Agrimony	Borage	Dulse
Goldenrod	Bay laurel leaves	Chickweed	Horsetail
Lemon peel	Nettle	Comfrey	Kelp powder
Nettle	Pine needles	Elder flower	Parsley
Parsley	Thyme	Rose petal	Raspberry leaf
Sage	Wintergreen	Feverfew	Yarrow
	Yarrow		

it will be helpful to review the contraindications for these products in Chapter 11 (Fangotherapy) and Chapter 12 (Thalassotherapy).



SANITATION

Used herbs, coffee, clay, or mud should not be put down on a standard drain after the treatment. Over time, these items can block the drain or damage the pipes. Filter the water out using a strainer and throw the solid matter away separately.

The Milk and Honey Hot Sheet Wrap

Milk, buttermilk, full-fat milk, and honey can also be used as a hot wrap product. This fragrant mix is deeply relaxing and will soften and smooth the skin. One to 2 cups of honey and 2 to 4 cups of powdered milk or regular milk are dissolved in approximately 10 to 12 quarts of water for this hot wrap (the concentration of the mix is up to the therapist).

The Cider or Juice Hot Wrap

Hot cider or juices such as orange, cranberry, or pineapple can be used in a hot wrap to brighten the skin's appearance, firm tissue, stimulate local circulation to the skin, and relax the body. At Christmas, cider and honey mixed with wine mulling spices make a deliciously aromatic seasonal hot wrap. One gallon of either juice or cider is mixed with 1 gallon of water and heated to 165°F.

The Hot Sheet Wrap Procedure

Dissolve the products chosen for the hot wrap in hot water (165°F) in either an 18-quart hot stone massage heating

unit or a hydrocollator. Fold the wrap sheets into tight squares as shown in Figure 9-1 and place them in the product solution (while it is heating in the stone heater or hydrocollator) for 20 minutes. A stone or weight placed on top of the sheets will keep them submerged completely. The water must be hot enough for the sheets to be pulled out of the heating unit, wrung out, stored in a soda cooler, and then unfolded on the treatment table without becoming cold. If a cold sheet wrap is being used, place the sheet and towel in a bucket of ice water for 10 minutes.

It is helpful to set up the massage table at a lower height so that it is easy for the client to climb onto the table and lie down on top of the hot sheet. If you are going to deliver a full-body massage after the wrap, the table may need to be higher to minimize physical stress on your body. In this case, the client can get onto the table using a step stool.

A basic hot sheet wrap takes approximately 20 to 30 minutes to deliver. This does not include the preheating phase, which takes up to 20 minutes beforehand. For this reason, a hot wrap is often given together with other treatments or enhancers to create a more rounded and fulfilling service. To enhance the treatment, depending on the equipment available, you might dry brush the client on a wet table or use a Vichy shower as the heating phase of the service. Another idea is to give the client a refreshing body scrub at the end of the wrap to help him or her cool down and to remove the impurities released from the skin during the wrap. A toning massage (delivered with skin toner and not oil) might be given before the wrap or a moisture massage could be given after the wrap. As you can see, you can adapt the hot sheet wrap procedure based on your goals for the session. For a look at the table setup for a hot sheet wrap, view Figure 9-2. For a quick snapshot of the basic procedure, see the hot sheet wrap overview in Treatment Overview 9-1 and Figure 9-3.



FIGURE 9-1 Folding a wrap sheet. **(A)** Open the sheet lengthwise across the width of the massage table and fold the long sides into the center. **(B and C)** Fold the two new sides into the center until the sheet is long and narrow. **(D and E)** Fold the ends of the long, narrow strip into the middle until the sheet is square.

Treatment Overview 9-1: The Hot Sheet Wrap Procedure Overview



Indications

To support the natural detoxification processes of the body; to support internal cleansing regimes, slimming, low immunity, low energy, and water retention; to help with the treatment of an addiction (e.g., nicotine, sugar, soda); sore, tight muscles; and certain skin conditions; to promote weight loss

Contraindications

Heart conditions, high blood pressure, pregnancy, vascular conditions, neurological conditions, illness or fever, acute conditions, inflammatory conditions, people who are in a weakened condition, children, the elderly

Supplies for the Treatment Table Setup (from the bottom layer to the top layer)

1. Wool blanket placed horizontally so that the long edges fall off either side of the treatment table



FIGURE 9-2 Massage table setup for a hot wrap. **(A)** The massage table is set from outermost layer to innermost layer as follows: wool blanket, thermal space blanket (shiny side up), and Fomentek (covered by a pillowcase). The hot sheet will be unfolded on top of the thermal space blanket (and Fomentek) directly before the client gets on the table and is wrapped up. **(B)** A bath towel is placed lengthwise, over the edges of the blankets on each end of the table. One of these bath towels will be used to wrap up the head and the other to wrap up the feet.

2. Thermal space blanket placed horizontally
3. Fomentek hot water bottle
4. Pillow case to cover the Fomentek
5. One bath towel placed horizontally at the top of the treatment table
6. One bath towel placed horizontally at the bottom of the treatment table

The table setup is shown in Figure 9-2.

Supplies Needed for a Dry Room Treatment

1. Insulated gloves
2. Soda cooler
3. Wrap sheets soaking in dissolved product in a heating unit
4. Foot soak container filled with warm water
5. Comfortable chair
6. Warm neck pillow (optional)
7. Warm pack for the feet
8. Robe and washable slippers
9. Warm herbal tea
10. Glass of water with a flexible straw
11. Disposable undergarments
12. Aroma mist

Dry Room Procedure

1. Foot soak and warm herbal tea
2. Hot sheet wrap
3. Process in the wrap
4. Unwrap
5. Session end (massage, body scrub, cool shower, etc.)

Facility with Sauna or Soaking Tub Procedure

1. Sauna or hot immersion for 15 minutes
2. Hot sheet wrap
3. Process in the wrap
4. Unwrap
5. Session end (massage, body scrub, cool shower, etc.)

Session Start

Ask the client to change into a robe, slippers, and disposable undergarments. The robe and slippers allow the client to move about the spa in comfort. Escort the client to a sauna, steam room, or wet room for step 1 of the service if such facilities are available. If there are no warming facilities available, use a warm foot soak, a heating unit, and blankets to warm the client before the wrap.



SANITATION

It is important for clients to wear disposable or washable slippers when they move about the spa or clinic to avoid cross-contamination with fungal infections. Robes and washable slippers must be freshly washed and dried (with heat) for each client.

Step 1: Increase Core Body Temperature

As mentioned previously, you can elevate the client's core body temperature in a number of ways. For example, the client can sit in a sauna or steam cabinet; soak in a warm hydrotherapy or standard soaking tub; receive a Vichy, Swiss, or Scotch hose treatment; take a hot shower; or rest sipping warm tea while soaking his or her feet in warm water. If a foot soak is used as the preheating method, it is helpful to ask the client to drink a cup of warm (not hot) herbal tea while relaxing in the soak. The reason that warm instead of hot tea is used is that hot tea must cool down, so the client will often leave it instead of drinking it. Warm flax seed packs or corn packs can be placed around the client's shoulders, and a heat lamp can be used to further heat the body. The goal is to get the client to perspire before being wrapped, especially if the goal of the treatment is detoxification.



FIGURE 9-3 The hot sheet wrap. **(A)** Increase core body temperature. In a dry room setting, a warm foot bath and cup of herbal tea are used to increase the client's core body temperature. A sauna, steam room, warm bath, or hot shower can also be used. **(B)** The wrap. The sheet is wrapped around the client, and the infused bath towel is placed on top of the sheet before the thermal blanket and wool blanket are brought up and around the client. The therapist must work quickly to trap the maximum amount of heat. **(C)** The wrap 2. The towel at the top of the table is brought up around the client's head. The second bath towel is wrapped around the feet, and a hot water bottle or hydrotherapy pack is placed under the feet for additional warmth. **(D)** Process. Water is offered through a straw during the processing phase of the wrap. **(E)** Aroma mist. The client is regularly misted with a soft, refreshing scent during the wrap phase of the treatment.

It is important to note that some clients will not perspire. They will feel warm throughout the treatment but never hot. This can happen even if you perform every step of the wrap correctly and efficiently. The hot sheet wrap is still relaxing, even if perspiration and, therefore, detoxification are minimal.

Step 2: Final Preparation for the Wrap

The table is set up with the wrap blankets and a **Fomentek** hot water bottle before the treatment. While the client is soaking his or her feet, remove the sheets from the hot

water solution. Using heavy, insulated gloves, wring the sheets (or sheet and bath towel) out as quickly as possible and place them in the cooler. If possible, the client should not see the therapist wring out the sheets with thermal gloves. The use of thermal gloves makes the clients feel that the sheet will be too hot, so they hesitate when they get on the treatment table. This hesitation results in a loss of valuable heat.

Take the client's feet out of the foot bath and dry them with a towel. Ask the client to stand on one side of the treatment table while you stand on the other side. It is a

good idea to describe the procedure to the client so that he or she knows what to do at each stage of the treatment. When both you and the client are ready, remove the hot sheet from the cooler and unfold it as quickly as possible on the massage table. Place it horizontally so that the long edges can be brought up around the client.

Step 3: The Wrap

The client removes the robe (he or she should be wearing disposable undergarments or an old swimsuit) and places him- or herself in the supine position on the massage table while you hold the sheet on one side and look away to preserve the client's modesty. Clients often find that the sheet feels too hot on their gluteals, so it is a good idea to put a hand towel on the sheet where the gluteals will rest before the client gets on the treatment table. Men often find that the sheet is too hot on their genitals (disposable undergarments are very thin). To solve this problem, the male clients can hold a hand towel in front of their genitals so that this area is insulated when the sheet is wrapped over them.

Quickly wrap the first hot sheet around the client. Pull the second hot sheet (or towel) from the cooler and lay this on top of the first hot sheet. The second sheet is only unfolded as much as needed to completely cover the top of the client. Next, the space blanket and then the wool blanket are tucked around the client. This wrap works best if it is fairly tight and snug. The towel at the top of the table is brought up around the client's head in a turban drape (described in Chapter 5) to lock body heat inside the wrap. The second bath towel is wrapped around the feet, and a hot pack (flax seed, hydrocollator, rice, hot water bottle, etc.) is placed under the client's feet for additional warmth. Once the client has been wrapped, you can place a bolster under the knees (outside the wrap blanket). Throughout the wrapping process, you want to move quickly and efficiently to trap the maximum amount of body heat.

Step 4: Process

The client usually starts to perspire within 5 minutes of being wrapped up. He or she may continue to perspire freely throughout the treatment. An aroma mist can be spritzed high over the client's face at various points during the wrap. This cools and calms the client. You may also dab the client's forehead with a cool cloth and offer water through a flexible straw every 3 to 5 minutes during the wrap. The flexible straw allows the client to sip water without lifting his or her head. It is important to stay with the client at all times during a wrap to provide support or to remove the client quickly from the wrap should he or she become claustrophobic.

Step 5: Unwrap

At the end of the wrap (the standard wrap time is between 20 to 30 minutes), the outer blankets and towels are removed,

leaving one sheet loosely draped around the client. When the client is ready, he or she can sit up and slip back into the robe. Help the client from the table and offer him or her a seat. Once seated, the client should sip cool water and dry off with a hand towel. With most infused or dissolved wrap products, the client will not feel sticky or unclean after the treatment.

Session End

The treatment can end in a number of different ways. In the dry room option described previously, the client is moved to a chair to sip water and cool down. While the client is cooling down, put clean massage sheets on the treatment table. Once the client is back on the table, provide a massage with a light lotion or gel product. A gel-based product works well because it feels velvety and cooling to the client who may still be hot and perspiring slightly. Alternatively, a refreshing body scrub or body shampoo might be used to remove the impurities released from the skin during the wrap. If a wet room is available, a graduated shower or cold plunge can be used to end the service.



SANITATION

The thermal space blanket is often overlooked in the cleanup process. Perspiration can soak through the wrap sheet and contaminate the space blanket. Spritz the inside of the space blanket with alcohol and let it air dry before it is folded and returned to a closed cabinet.

The Cocoon

In a cocoon, the treatment product is not dissolved in water but is applied directly to the client before the client is wrapped in a plastic sheet and a blanket. Although this type of wrap might still be used for detoxification and slimming treatments (i.e., seaweed, paraffin, etc.), the client does not need to perspire for the wrap to work well. Sometimes, this wrap procedure is used with a product that aims to cool body tissues (e.g., a sunburn wrap). In this case, the body is wrapped lightly in plastic to allow air to circulate around the client.

In a cocoon procedure, you will almost always want to use an exfoliation product before the treatment product is applied to the skin. The removal of dead skin cells increases the absorption of the product into the skin. An exception would be a sunburn wrap where the treatment is aimed at soothing sunburned or irritated skin, in which case, exfoliation is contraindicated.

For essential instructions common to most cocoons, see Treatment Overview 9-2.

Treatment Overview 9-2: The Cocoon Overview



Indications

Indications are dependent on the product that is chosen for the treatment.

Contraindications

Contraindications are dependent on the product that is chosen for the treatment. For example, seaweed is contraindicated for pregnancy or thyroid disorders. A shea butter cocoon would be suitable for such individuals.

Supplies for the Treatment Table Setup (from the bottom layer to top layer)

1. Blanket (wool or cotton) set horizontally so that the long edges fall on either side of the table
2. Thermal space blanket turned horizontally (optional)
3. A plain flat sheet turned in its normal orientation on the table (if the product needs to be removed in a dry room)
4. A plastic sheet turned horizontally
5. One bath towel placed horizontally at the top of the table
6. One bath towel placed horizontally at the bottom of the table
7. Drape

A Fomentek bottle might be used under the massage sheet if additional warmth is needed. The table setup for a cocoon is shown in Figure 9-4.

Supplies for the Work Table Setup

1. Exfoliation product
2. Treatment product
3. Application brush or vinyl gloves
4. Finishing product
5. Aroma and/or aura mist
6. Soda cooler
7. Hot moist towels
8. Dry hand towels
9. Disposable undergarments

Procedure

1. Exfoliation
2. Treatment product application
3. Cocoon
4. Processing time where the feet or face could be massaged
5. Unwrap
6. Application of finishing product

Cocoon Types

Many different types of product are used in cocoons. Cocoons can be based on emollient products, aromatherapy products, paraffin or Parafango, cellulite or firming products, vitamins, aloe vera, cryogenic products, seaweed, mud, clay, peat, or other natural elements. Some cocoon products are shown in Figure 9-4. Treatment outlines for cocoons based on each of these products are provided below. Unlike the hot sheet wrap,

there is a wide degree of variability in the way a cocoon might be delivered or enhanced. These outlines are just samples and are not meant to suggest that this is the only way to do a particular treatment. You need to experiment with products and treatment steps until you discover what you believe your clients would enjoy and what you will enjoy delivering. For a video demonstrating cocoon technique, visit thePoint.

Emollient Cocoon

Emollient cocoons make use of the healing qualities of medium to heavy lipids such as shea butter, almond butter, evening primrose, wheat germ, jojoba, hemp seed, and borage oil to revitalize the skin, increase the skin's moisture content, and to provide a moisture barrier. Often, emollient cocoons are enhanced by adding essential oils that give the treatment a wider range of benefits. Hemp seed oil (*Cannabis sativa* L.) is of special interest to massage therapists because of its anti-inflammatory and pain-relieving qualities. When used in a cocoon, it is good for sore muscles and soft tissue conditions such as fibromyalgia and chronic pain. It degrades easily, so it must be stored in a refrigerator at all times.

Shea butter comes from the nut of *Vitellaria paradoxa* (also widely known under the botanical name of *Butyrospermum parkii*), a tree found only in the semi-arid Sahel region of West Africa and Cameroon. Shea nuts have traditionally been processed and used by women in West Africa to protect their skin from drying out in the hot African sun. As the demand for shea butter increases, international and local organizations promoting jobs for women of Africa are starting to provide funding for modern processing equipment, which has led to the availability of high-quality shea butter in the United States.

Pure shea butter has a firm texture and must be slowly warmed in a double boiler until it is liquid before it is applied to the body with a brush and left to absorb. Excess shea can be massaged into the skin at the end of the service. Alternatively, the shea is warmed until it is a liquid and then essential oils and a small amount of a fixed oil such as wheat germ are added. The warm shea mixture is then whipped in a blender as it cools so that it has a frothy texture when applied to the body. Shea butter is composed mainly of triglycerides and linoleic acid. It is high in vitamins A, E, and F. It has antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, antiarthritic, skin soothing, skin healing, and skin moisturizing properties and is believed to bring relief from chronic skin diseases, scarring, and stretch marks. It is finding its way into many hair care products as a small amount revitalizes dry, damaged hair.

An emollient cocoon using shea butter might be delivered as follows: (1) exfoliation, (2) warm melted shea brushed onto the body, (3) cocoon, (4) unwrap, and (5) full-body massage using excess shea as the lubricant. If the spa or clinic has a steam canopy, the shea emollient cocoon can be delivered as follows: (1) exfoliation, (2) full-body massage with whipped shea butter and essential oils, (3) place a steam canopy over the client and steam the shea for 15 minutes, and (4) blot the client dry with a hand towel.



FIGURE 9-4 Types of cocoons. **(A1 and A2)** Parafango. In a Parafango wrap, a tension wrap is often used on target areas for slimming before the entire body is cocooned. **(B1)** Cryogenic. Cryogenic products can make the client cold, so they are often used for spot treatments. **(B2)** Some cocoon products (such as this cryogenic product) are made with a component that causes them to rubberize after a short time. They are pulled off the client in one piece, making cleanup easy. **(C)** Emollient (shea). Shea; honey; and other heavy butters, creams, or oils are used in a cocoon to relax the body and rejuvenate the skin. In this particular wrap, essential oils have been added to the shea butter so it could also be considered an aromatherapy wrap. **(D1 and D2)** Natural elements (papaya and yogurt). **(E)** Seaweed or fango.

Aromatherapy Cocoon

An aromatherapy cocoon can be offered as a standalone service using premade blends or as a more comprehensive service including a professional aromatherapy consultation, custom blending session, massage, and wrap. The oils may be chosen for their physiological effects (i.e., support the natural detoxification mechanisms of the body, stimulate immunity, reduce muscle soreness, etc.) or for their effects on the mind and spirit. The goal is to provide a space where body and mind can rest, be still, and reflect while surrounded by inspiring and uplifting fragrances. Essential oils can be mixed into a number of different carrier products including seaweed, clay, shea butter, and aloe vera gel. Aromatherapy and blending are covered in detail in Chapter 7. A sample aromatherapy cocoon outline might be delivered as follows: (1) aromatherapy consultation, (2) custom blend, (3) dry brush exfoliation, (4) massage with essential oils in a massage cream, (5) application of steamy aroma-infused towels to the anterior body, (6) cocoon, (7) firming face massage while the client is cocooned, (8) unwrap, and (9) aura mist to end the session.

Paraffin or Parafango Cocoon

Paraffin provides deeply penetrating warmth to the area where it is applied. It traps heat and moisture at the skin's surface, which increases local circulation and helps with product absorption (sometimes, a product such as a cellulite cream will be applied under the paraffin). It is an effective treatment for chronic arthritis and painful joints. It also leaves skin feeling soft and supple.

Parafango is a combination of fango (mud) and paraffin with different melting points. It is heated and applied with a brush, or it is poured into forms to make large body packs. Parafango has been used successfully as a means of therapy for such conditions as osteoarthritis, chronic conditions, muscular spasm, and scleroderma. The superior heat retention properties of Parafango have led to its use in the United States for the reduction of cellulite and inch loss in target areas. The flow of heat from Parafango is continuous and long lasting. Traditional hydrotherapy packs cool within 30 minutes, but Parafango packs remain warm for up to 60 minutes. Parafango is different than peat or mud in that it is designed for heat delivery, and there is little or no absorption of minerals through the skin. The heat it delivers increases local circulation, facilitates perspiration to aid the natural detoxification mechanisms of the body, helps with product absorption, decreases hypertonicities of muscular tissue, decreases pain, and increases relaxation.

In a full-body paraffin or Parafango cocoon, the product is applied with a large application brush (large paintbrush size) and then covered in plastic using the sit-up method described in Chapter 5 (Foundation Skills for Spa Treatment Delivery). Sometimes, gauze strips are dipped in the paraffin or Parafango and then layered on the body. As these two products are often used in cellulite treatments, a cellulite cocoon outline is described here: (1) full-body exfoliation,

(2) apply cellulite cream to target areas, (3) apply paraffin or Parafango over the cellulite cream in target areas, (4) cocoon, (5) massage the face or feet, (6) remove the paraffin or Parafango, and (7) massage firming cream into target areas.

A treatment designed for sore back pain and using Parafango might consist of the following steps: (1) With the client prone, apply Parafango to the back, (2) massage the legs, (3) remove Parafango from the back and massage the back, (4) application of a cooling, pain-relieving aroma support lotion to the back, (5) turn the client supine, and (6) massage the neck and shoulders to complete the session.

Aloe Vera Cocoon

At tropical and resort spas, it is not uncommon to see an aloe sunburn relief wrap included in the menu of services. Guests often overexpose themselves to the sun during the first few days of their vacations. Research supports the use of aloe for dry skin, ulceration, acne, and chapped skin and to soothe the inflammation and itching in conditions such as eczema, poison ivy, and allergic reactions.² A combination of aloe and essential oils that works well for sunburn is 1½ cup of aloe vera gel, 5 drops of German chamomile essential oil, 10 drops of lavender essential oil, and 1 drop of peppermint essential oil. Mix well and apply this blend to the skin in a heavy layer (do not exfoliate sunburned skin). A treatment outline might look like this: (1) Apply the aloe vera blend or aloe-based treatment product with a brush, (2) cocoon in plastic and a light blanket for 20 minutes, (3) massage the feet while the aloe absorbs (so long as the tops of the feet are not sunburned), (4) unwrap the client and apply cool coffee- and/or green tea-infused towels to the body and allow them to sit for 5 minutes, and (5) apply an after-sun lotion with gentle hands or with a brush without removing the aloe vera.

Cryogenic Cocoon

Cryogenic products are often composed of a kaolin clay base with menthol as the active ingredient. Menthol increases peripheral circulation and affects cold receptors in the skin, resulting in a cooling sensation. Besides the cooling effect, menthol has a numbing, pain-relieving action that is indicated for use on stiff or sore muscles. It alleviates itching from skin conditions and stimulates local circulation to the skin and muscles.

The problem with cryogenic products is that they may make the client cold—really cold. For this reason, cryogenic applications work best as spot treatments. For a sports application, you might apply the cryogenic product to areas of particular stiffness such as the lower back, hamstrings, and gluteal muscles. Use blankets, heat lamps, and warm packs to keep the rest of the body warm. A cryogenic sports outline might progress as follows: (1) Massage the back; (2) apply a cryogenic product to sore areas of the back; avoid covering the entire back as this will be too cold; focus on one area of particular stiffness such as the upper back and shoulders, or directly down the spine, or on the low back; (3) massage the legs; (4) apply the cryogenic product to the hamstrings or

lower legs; (5) remove the cryogenic product from the back and apply a pain-relieving finishing lotion; (6) remove the cryogenic product from the legs and apply a pain-relieving finishing lotion; and (7) turn the client to the supine position and massage the neck and shoulders to finish the treatment.

You might notice that the cryogenic product shown in Figure 9-5 can be removed without water and hot towels. A component of this mask rubberizes shortly after it is mixed up. When it dries and at the end of the treatment period, the entire “mask” is simply peeled off the skin. A number of different products are currently being formulated to rubberize, so they can be removed easily without a shower or even hot, moist towels.

Seaweed Cocoon

Seaweed has a number of positive benefits for the body when it is applied topically. It has been used successfully to promote endocrine balance, to reduce the symptoms of fibromyalgia, for detoxification, to decrease pain from sore muscles, and to stimulate circulation to the skin and muscles. It is a popular choice for slimming and firming treatments because it increases skin tone and makes the body appear smoother and more contoured. Seaweed is discussed in detail in Chapter 12 (Thalassotherapy). A general seaweed cocoon might progress in this manner: (1) exfoliation, (2) application of seaweed, (3) cocoon for 20 minutes (massage the face and feet), (4) removal of seaweed, and (5) full-body massage.

Fango Cocoon (Mud, Clay, or Peat)

Mud, clay, and peat are therapeutically different, so they are used for different reasons in a treatment. Each of these substances is discussed in depth in Chapter 11 (Fangotherapy). In general, these substances can be used for musculoskeletal injury and health or to refine the texture of



Broaden Your Understanding 9-1 THE VITAMIN COCOON

Vitamin cocoons use products that are high in vitamins A, C, B, and E to nourish the skin. Vitamin A helps to balance and normalize (in terms of pH and sebaceous output) dry skin or skin that has been overexposed to the sun. High levels of vitamin A (retinol) are used to decrease fine lines and wrinkles. Vitamin B₅ (panthenol) functions as a moisturizer and skin conditioner, whereas vitamin B₃ (niacinamide) speeds the turnover of surface skin cells to clarify the skin and improve its texture.³ Vitamin E is a well-known antioxidant that acts as a natural preservative, helping to decrease the development of wrinkles and discolorations. With age, the number of papillae in the epidermal-dermal junction in human skin is reduced; this restricts the supply of nutrients to the epidermis and contributes to skin aging. Vitamin C (ascorbic acid) decreases the oxidative stress on the skin and increases the number of papillae in the dermis.⁴

Vitamin facials are currently a popular treatment performed by estheticians, which has led in recent times to the availability of full-body vitamin products. Because the main goal of vitamin treatments is to improve the health of the skin, they are not usually within the scope of practice for massage therapists in most states. Vitamin products also tend to be a little expensive but usually have linked home care products that generate a greater income for the spa or clinic.

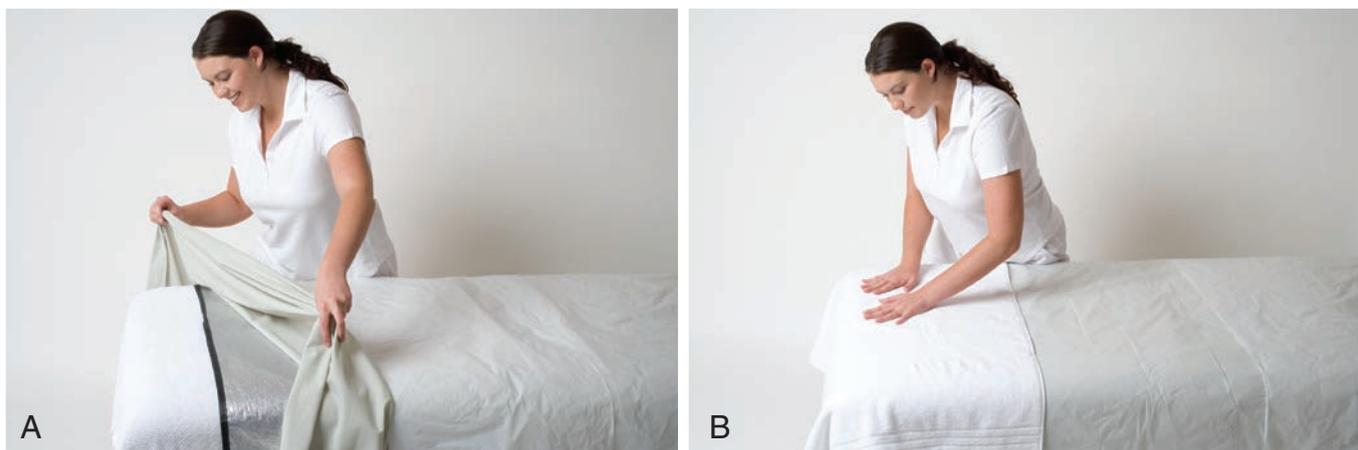


FIGURE 9-5 Massage table setup for a cocoon. **(A)** The massage table is set from the outermost layer to innermost layer as follows: blanket (wool or cotton), thermal space blanket (optional), and a plain flat sheet in its normal orientation on the massage table (for dry room removal only). On top of this, place a plastic sheet turned sideways on the table so that it covers the blanket. **(B)** A bath towel is placed across the top and bottom of the plastic sheet at either end of the table to anchor the plastic wrap sheet.

the skin. A general fango cocoon outline might progress as follows: (1) exfoliation, (2) application of fango, (3) cocoon for 20 to 30 minutes (massage the face and feet), (4) removal of fango, and (5) full-body massage.

Natural Elements Cocoon

Some spas specialize in using natural food items such as papaya, pumpkin, avocado, honey, yogurt, oatmeal, or cucumber in cocoons. Often, the food item is mashed up and spread on the body in the same manner as seaweed or mud. Many natural food items are beneficial for the skin and have pleasing fragrances. However, they do tend to be more messy and time-consuming than premixed, prepackaged items. Like the seaweed and fango cocoon, a natural elements cocoon will follow the standard cocoon progression: (1) exfoliation, (2) application of the natural product, (3) cocoon, (4) removal of the product, and (5) massage.

The Cocoon Procedure

The procedure described here is a basic cocoon that can be used with a variety of products. As mentioned before, there are many ways to deliver this type of body wrap, so you are encouraged to explore your options or to modify techniques as you deem appropriate. For example, if a steam canopy is available, you might steam the product instead of using wrap blankets to warm the client. The procedure here ends with a massage but could just as easily end with a Vichy shower or a hydrotherapy tub soak.

You can ask the client to wear disposable undergarments, use standard draping practices, or use a combination of both. With a very messy product such as seaweed or mud, standard draping can be challenging. The product invariably gets all over the drape and from the drape onto the floor, on the walls, and onto you. In a wet room, this is not so much of a problem as it is in a dry room. The simplest method is to start with the client wearing disposable undergarments, drape him or her as much as possible with a bath towel, and have a heat lamp available for extra warmth. The table setup for a cocoon is shown in Figure 9-5. The cocoon overview in Treatment Overview 9-2 and Figure 9-6 provides a snapshot of this procedure.

Session Start

Because the client needs to be in a supine position for the wrapping up phase of the treatment, he or she should begin the service in the prone position.

Step 1: Exfoliation of the Posterior and Anterior Body

A number of different types of exfoliation might be used at the beginning of a cocoon treatment. Choose the technique that best supports the overall treatment goals for the session you're providing. For example, you might choose a dry skin brush exfoliation with a cocoon that aims to stimulate the natural detoxification processes of the body. A body polish might be given when the cocoon aims to relax the client. A salt glow would be appropriate for cocoons that energize

the body. Directions for exfoliation treatments are provided in Chapter 8 (Exfoliation Treatments).

The manner in which you apply an exfoliation service will be determined by the type of product application method you choose for the cocoon as discussed in Chapter 5 (Foundation Skills for Spa Treatment Delivery). For example,

- **The sit-up method of application:** (1) client prone, (2) exfoliate the posterior body, (3) turn the client supine, (4) exfoliate the anterior body, and (5) apply product using the sit-up method.
- **The flip-over method of application:** (1) client prone, (2) exfoliate the posterior body, (3) apply product to the posterior body, (3) the client "flips over," (4) exfoliate the anterior body, and (5) apply product to the anterior body.
- **The side-lying method:** (1) client supine, (2) exfoliate the anterior body, (3) position the client in a side-lying position and exfoliate the posterior body, (4) apply product, (5) roll client to the other side, and (6) apply product.

Step 2: Product Application

The product application method shown in Figure 9-6 is the sit-up method. It is therefore assumed that both the posterior body and anterior body have been exfoliated, and the client is now in the supine position. The knees are bent, and the treatment product is applied to both the anterior and posterior sides of the legs. The legs are flattened against the plastic body wrap, and the client is asked to sit up (remove the bolster first). The treatment product is applied to the back and gluteals, and the client is asked to lie back down. Finally, the abdominal area, upper chest, and arms are treated and the client is wrapped in the plastic.

Massage Application: If the treatment product is applied using massage, you will want to exfoliate the posterior body and then apply the treatment product as in the flip-over method described in Chapter 5. It is a good idea to wear gloves so that your hands don't need to be cleaned. The treatment product is massaged in from the posterior legs to the gluteals and then on the back. Depending on the product, a full range of strokes might be used. The client is "flipped," and the anterior body is exfoliated and then massaged with the treatment product. The client is now in the supine position and ready for the cocoon.

Step 3: Cocoon

The plastic wrap is pulled up around the client and tucked in loosely. Next, the outer wrapping materials are pulled up and around the client. The bath towel at the top of the massage table is used around the client's head in a turban drape or tucked into the top of the cocoon. The feet are wrapped with the towel at the bottom of the massage table. Hot water bottles, heat lamps, or warm packs can be used for additional warmth if they are needed.

Step 4: Process

While the client is "processing" in the wrap, provide a relaxing face massage. Offer the client a sip of water or herbal

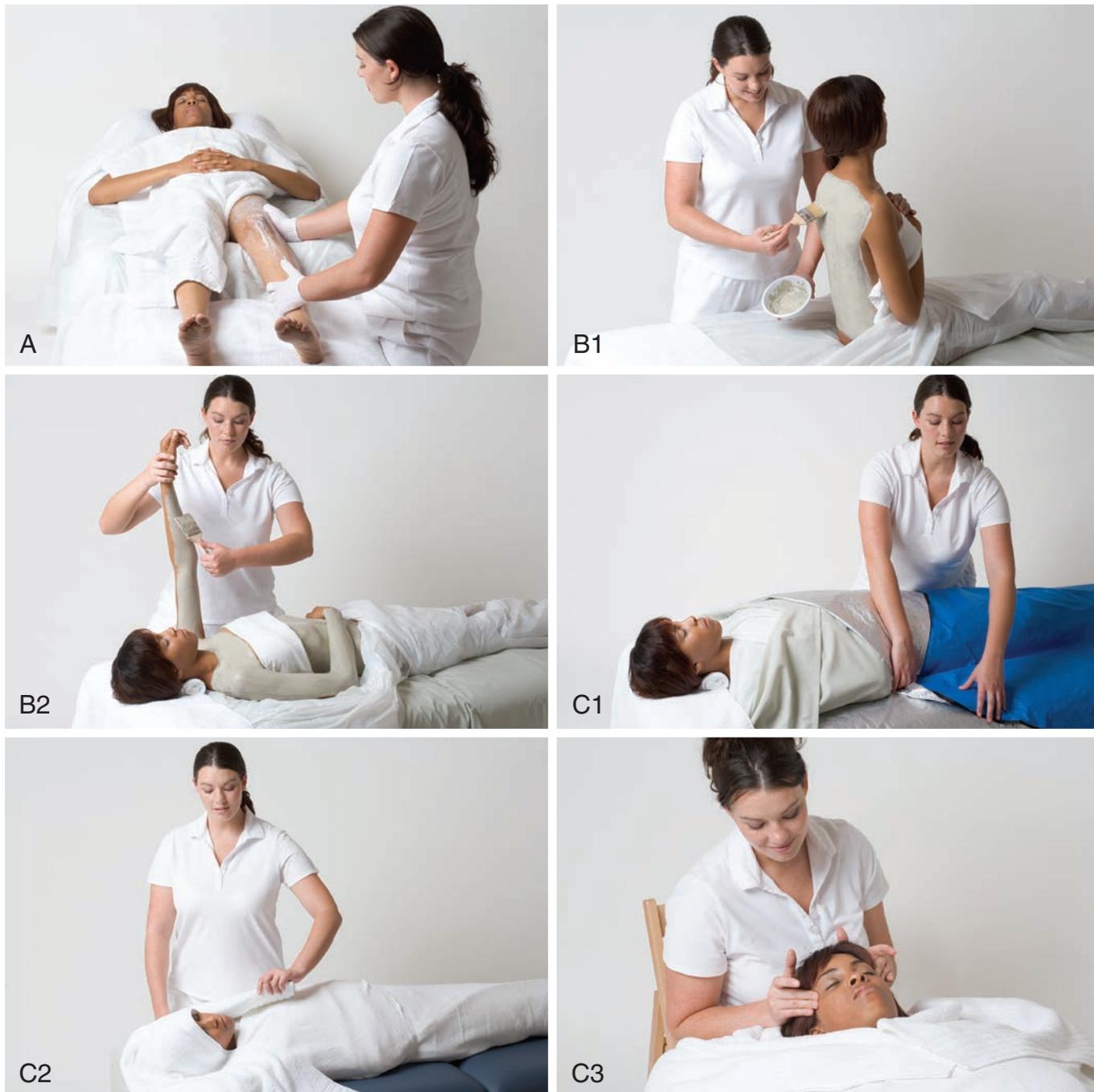


FIGURE 9-6 The cocoon. **(A)** Exfoliation. Exfoliate prone and then turn the client to the supine position. This way, the client are face up for the cocoon. **(B1 and B2)** Product application. Apply the treatment product to the newly exfoliated body areas with massage strokes or with a large application brush. In these pictures, the legs have already been treated and wrapped up in the plastic. **(C1–C3)** Cocoon. The plastic wrap and blankets are pulled up and around the client. The towel at the top of the table is wrapped around the head in a “turban” drape, and the towel at the bottom of the table is wrapped around the feet. Notice that a light cotton blanket is used instead of a heavy wool blanket. A client does not need to perspire in a cocoon, so lighter wrap materials are used.

iced tea through a flexible straw and mist him or her with an aroma mist or spring water. Massage the client’s feet at the conclusion of the face massage. In a hot sheet wrap, the client is perspiring freely and will not appreciate either a face or foot massage. In a cocoon, enhancers such as face massage, hot stone foot massage, reflexology, a scalp

treatment, or other special extras will help to make the treatment exceptional for the client.

Step 5: Unwrap

To remove the wrap, the blankets are pulled off the client. At this point, the client is still wrapped in plastic. You now

have two options based on the equipment you have available in your facility.

Option 1: If a shower is available, you can leave the client wrapped loosely in the plastic and move him or her to the shower. If the client has to go outside the treatment room to get to the shower, he or she will need to be draped over the top of the plastic with a bathrobe or sheet. As the client steps into the shower, the plastic is handed back to the therapist who throws it away. While the client showers, change the treatment table to massage sheets. The treatment can end with a full-body massage or with a quick application of a finishing lotion, cream, or gel.

Option 2: In many different types of body wraps, the client is covered in a spa treatment product and then wrapped in plastic. After the treatment product is removed, a finishing product is applied to the client, often in a full-body massage. In a dry room setting where a shower is not available, you have to get the dirty plastic out from underneath the client without asking the client to get off the treatment table (a clean massage sheet has been preset under the plastic). We discussed this process in depth in Chapter 5, but it is repeated here for your convenience. First, review Figure 9-7 and unwrap the plastic, leaving the client covered by the breast drape and anterior pelvic drape



FIGURE 9-7 Removal from the cocoon. (A–E) If the cocoon product does not need to be removed from the client (e.g., shea butter), the client is left on the plastic for the remainder of the treatment (massage or application of a finishing product). If the product is messy (such as this marine clay), it will need to be removed from the client, and the plastic will need to be removed from the treatment table before the massage or application of a finishing product. These images were also used in Chapter 5 with step-by-step instructions for moving a client from plastic to a massage sheet.

(or disposable undergarments). Remove the product from the client's arms, upper chest, and abdominal area and ask him or her to hold onto the breast drape and sit up. Remove the product from the client's back and the posterior arms. Roll up the plastic sheet so that the dirty side is rolled in until it sits as close to the gluteals as possible and ask the client to lie back down (onto the clean preset massage sheet). Move down to the lower legs and wipe the feet with a hot towel and ask the client to bend his or her knees and hold his or her feet up. Roll up the dirty side of the plastic that is underneath the client's feet. Place the client's clean feet on the massage sheet, which is underneath the plastic (the knees are still bent). Remove the spa product from both legs with hot towels and roll the plastic up as high as possible under the gluteals. Place the clean legs flat on the massage sheet and cover the client with a sheet or towel for warmth. The client then lies back down on the massage sheet and slightly lifts his or her hips so that the plastic can be removed. You want to work quickly and efficiently during product removal because the client must stay alert during this entire process, and if you take too long, the session will feel dull and uninspired.

Session End

The treatment might end in different ways as mentioned previously. Some treatment products will absorb completely, so the finishing product is simply applied over the top of the first product. You may choose to provide a full-body massage at the end of the cocoon. Alternatively, a full-body massage may have been given before the wrapping up phase. With some treatment products, the skin does not need a finishing lotion or cream (e.g., emollient products). With others, it does. An aura mist might be spritzed high over the client to signal the end of the session and fill the treatment room with a refreshing scent.



SANITATION

After every treatment, product bottles and equipment should be sanitized with alcohol.

This is important to prevent cross-contamination. For example, if you massage the client's feet, do not sanitize your hands, and then pick up the bottle of finishing lotion, the bottle is now contaminated. If it is used on another client without being sanitized, the second client has potentially been exposed to an infectious pathogen.

Tension Wraps

A tension wrap is used in combination with a treatment product (e.g., cellulite cream) with the aim of "pushing" excess fluid out of a limb (e.g., thigh) or to compress tissue so that it appears slimmer when unwrapped. Tension wraps also increase heat in a body area so that the area perspires.

Tension wraps are either made of terry cloth strips that are soaked in a treatment product (e.g., herbal infusion, dissolved seaweed) or of heavy cellophane on a small roll. The wrap strip or roll is circled up the limb or torso either with the treatment product on it or over the top of a treatment product that has already been applied to the area. Tension wraps are controversial. Some therapists feel that treatments featuring tension wraps mislead clients into believing that these wraps can make them lose inches and weight. In fact, the results experienced with tension wraps are usually temporary. Other therapists swear by tension wraps and point to their popularity with clients. Tension wraps are offered in many spas, so you should know the methods that are used in this type of body wrap so that you can make your own decision about this treatment's viability.

It is important to note that tension wraps are potentially dangerous and can cause damage to blood vessels if a limb is wrapped too tightly. Overtight wrapping most often occurs with the heavy cellophane wraps that are easy to pull tightly and twist to flatness against the skin. In one case of overtight tension wrapping, the client developed a varicose vein as a result of the treatment. The need for caution cannot be stressed enough. Do not apply a tension wrap to a client with poor circulation, diabetes, circulatory conditions, high blood pressure, spider veins, or varicose veins.

You may choose to measure the size of target areas before and after the application. Usually, the midcalf, midthigh, hips, waist, and, sometimes, the upper arm are measured and treated. A session including the use of a tension wrap might progress as follows: (1) The client is measured, (2) full-body exfoliation, (3) application of a specialized cellulite cream or firming product to target areas, (4) tension wrap, (5) the body is cocooned in warm blankets to process, (6) removal of the blankets and tension wrap, and (7) application of a finishing product to target areas.

Techniques for Tension Wrapping

If terry strip tension wraps are used, they are rolled up and then placed in a crock pot or hot stone heating unit full of dissolved treatment product rather like the hot sheet wrap. The terry strips are then removed and wrung out before being placed in a soda cooler to keep them hot. The strips are wrapped around the area that is being treated. Sometimes, a treatment product such as a cellulite cream is applied underneath the wet tension wrap but not always.

If a cellophane wrap is used, the treatment product is applied directly to the client, and then the area is wrapped. Sometimes, more than one product is applied, as in the case of a Parafango cellulite treatment. In this treatment, a specialized cream is massaged into target areas and then covered by hot Parafango, which activates the specialized cream. The tension wrap is applied over the top of the Parafango.

The wrapping techniques are described using the cellophane wrap, but wrapping with terry strips is carried out



FIGURE 9-8 Techniques for tension wraps. **(A1–A4)** Tension wrap of the legs—on table. Start on the foot and wrap up the leg. Move forward as you work higher. Twist the wrap to keep it flat against the client's leg. **(B)** Tension wrap of the legs—standing. **(C)** Tension wrap of the hips and belly. (*continued*)

in the same way. Cellophane is a bit easier to work with because it sticks to itself, so you don't have to worry about it slipping. Terry strips loosen and slip easily; they require a lot of practice. You may notice that for some of the techniques described here, the client is standing up. This is not ideal because the client cannot fully relax during the session. In many cases, a good wrap and noticeable results will be more important to the client than relaxation, so he or

she won't mind this positioning. Tension wrapping techniques are shown in Figure 9-8.

Tension Wrap the Legs—Client on the Table

With the client supine, unwrap a small bit of plastic from the cellophane roll and hold it in place on the client's foot as you lift his or her leg at a straight angle onto your shoulder. While one hand holds the plastic wrap onto the foot,



FIGURE 9-8 (continued) (D) Tension wrap of the arms. (E1–E3) Removal of tension wrap.

the other brings the wrap roll around the ankle to begin wrapping the client's leg. Work distal to proximal twisting the wrap with each turn to keep it flat against the client's skin. The aim of the wrap is to encourage tissue fluid to move from the distal area of the leg towards the heart.

As you reach the knee, lift the leg up from your shoulder and move your body weight forward as you continue to wrap the plastic. When you reach the hip, anchor the plastic under the client and repeat the process on the opposite leg.

Tension Wrap the Legs—Client Standing

This is the easiest way to get a good wrap. The client stands with his or her legs apart. The therapist anchors the strip of plastic under the client's heel and wraps from the ankle up the leg, twisting the plastic to keep it flat against the client's leg. Once both legs have been wrapped, move onto the waist and hips.

Tension Wrap the Hips and Abdominal Area

It is very difficult to get a good wrap on the hips and abdominal area with the client supine on the table. If the client is sitting up, this does not work well either because the belly will pouch, so the wrap becomes loose when the client lies down. It is easiest to get a good wrap with the client standing up. This way, you can move directly from the last leg you

wrapped to the hips and then over the abdominal area. Circle the wrap around the client's torso and pull it snug. If the client is standing next to the table, he or she simply leans back and swings onto the table to relax while the wrap takes effect.

Tension Wrap the Arms

Usually, the lower body is treated and allowed to “process” while the upper body is treated. The arm is wrapped from the wrist up to the deltoid even though the lower arm is not usually covered in treatment product.

Unwrap

To remove terry strip wraps, simply unwind them from the client's body. Cellophane wraps are cut in a straight line up the front of the wrap using a specially designed safe cutter.



SANITATION

The terry wraps should be stored in a closed, ventilated container after they are removed from the client. Straight after the session, they should be laundered in hot water with a commercial-grade laundry detergent and dried with heat. They are then rerolled and stored in a closed cabinet.

SPA FUSION

INTEGRATION OF SKILLS



STUDY TIP: Catchwords

Catchwords, catchphrases, and acronyms, such as SHARP, used to remember the signs and symptoms of acute inflammation, are useful memory devices.

SHARP stands for

- S = Swelling
- H = Heat
- A = A loss of function
- R = Redness
- P = Pain

When you are trying to remember something such as the steps in a spa treatment process, write out its aspects in brief notes and see if they don't suggest a catchword or catchphrase. Come test time, you will be glad you made the extra effort.

SPA INSPIRATION: Mix and Match

You may have noticed that you can apply body wrap treatments in a variety of different ways. Here's a challenge. Pick one body wrap type (e.g., shea butter cocoon) and deliver it with three different session starts and three different session ends. This way, you see how easy it is to mix and match treatment elements to make unique spa body treatments with your personal stamp of style and excellence.

GOOD TO KNOW: Sample Sizes

Most spa suppliers are willing to send therapists sample sizes of product to try out before they purchase large "back bar" product containers (that can be very expensive). Contact two or three spa suppliers and order sample sizes of anything you might imagine using in a body wrap service. Meet up with a classmate and experiment with different products. Soon you will discover what you really like and want to use in your own spa practice.

CHAPTER WRAP-UP

In a body wrap, the body is enclosed in sheets or plastic and insulating blankets to trap heat. This stimulates detoxification through perspiration and/or helps the skin to absorb any products that you applied. Today, a wide variety of body wraps are used for cosmetic purposes or to treat conditions such as low immunity, fatigue, muscular aches, and pain or

simply for relaxation. In this chapter, you learned that there are numerous ways to give a body wrap, but two procedures that work well are the hot sheet wrap and the cocoon. If you practice these two techniques until you can perform them fluidly, you will be prepared to deliver a variety of different services in a spa or to add body wraps to your own massage and spa practice.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Multiple Choice

1. A cold sheet wrap is a form of this type of wrap.
 - a. Detoxification and immune boosting wrap
 - b. Cryogenic wrap
 - c. French hydrotherapy wrap
 - d. Skin care wrap
2. Hot wraps elevate body temperature and create an artificial fever. This:
 - a. Dehydrates the body and causes brain damage
 - b. Accelerates the elimination of toxins through perspiration
 - c. Causes a temporary reduction in immunity
 - d. Causes antibody production and T-cell proliferation to decrease
3. In a cold sheet wrap:
 - a. The body experiences a vascular flush effect.
 - b. The body shivers, which tones muscles.
 - c. The skin is cooled, which softens its texture.
 - d. The muscles contract, which forces excess water from the tissues.
4. The client does not need to perspire in this type of wrap.
 - a. Coffee slimming wrap
 - b. Emollient cocoon
 - c. Herbal hot sheet wrap
 - d. Seaweed detoxification wrap
5. Many ancient healing traditions used _____ as a medicine to decrease toxic buildup in the body.
 - a. Aloe vera
 - b. Shea butter
 - c. Massage oil
 - d. Herbs

SPA FUSION

INTEGRATION OF SKILLS (continued)



Matching

Match the client to the most appropriate treatment option.

- | | | |
|--|----------------------------|---|
| A. Herbal detox wrap | D. Aloe vera wrap | 7. _____ Healthy client who is about to start a diet |
| B. Cryogenic wrap | E. Shea butter wrap | 8. _____ Client with chronically dry skin |
| C. Lavender and rose petal wrap | | 9. _____ Athlete who has sore and stiff muscles |
| 6. _____ Elderly client who is in good health but has minor circulatory insufficiency | | 10. _____ Sunburned client |

10

Spa Foot Treatments

Chapter Outline

General Treatment Considerations

- Contraindications
- Reflexology Certification
- Possible Reactions to Reflexology
- Therapist and Client Comfort during Reflexology

Elements of a Spa Foot Treatment

- A Quick Foot Assessment
- Soaking and Cleansing the Feet
- Exfoliation
- Foot Massage
- Reflexology
- Treatment Products
- Finishing Products

A Sample Spa Foot Treatment Procedure

- Session Start
- Step 1: Soak and Cleanse
- Step 2: Exfoliation
- Step 3: Move the Client to the Treatment Table
- Step 4: Foot Massage
- Step 5: Reflexology
- Step 6: Application of Treatment Product
- Step 7: Process
- Step 8: Removal of the Treatment Product
- Session End



SPA FUSION
INTEGRATION OF SKILLS

STUDY TIP: Pay Attention to Your Internal Clock

GOOD TO KNOW: Reflexology Certification

CHAPTER WRAP-UP

Key Terms

Arch: The bones in the foot are actually arranged to form three strong arches (the medial longitudinal arch, the lateral longitudinal arch, and the transverse arch) that are commonly referred to as the arch of the foot. The arch provides the foot with the strength to support the body while remaining flexible and mobile.

Callus: A small area of thickened skin that is caused by continued friction or pressure. The epidermis becomes more active in response to mild, repetitive irritation. This causes a localized increase in the thickened tissue at the surface of the skin.

Cuticle: The border of the nail is partly covered by a fold of skin commonly called the cuticle. In a pedicure (or manicure of the hands), the cuticle is pushed back so that the surface of the nail appears cleaner and smoother.

Dorsiflexion: Bending the top of the foot (the dorsal surface) toward the shin.

Nail technician: A practitioner who is certified or licensed to provide care of the nails or to apply, repair, or decorate gel nails or acrylic nails.

Pedicure: A treatment in which the foot is soaked, calluses are reduced, the nail is trimmed and filed, the cuticle is pushed back and trimmed, and the nail is buffed or polish is applied to the nail. Nail care is provided only by a certified nail technician or a cosmetologist (depending on the laws of the particular state).

Plantar flexion: Bending the bottom of the foot (plantar surface) downward (as in pointing the toes).

Reflexology: A holistic therapy that is based on the belief that specific points on the hands, ears, and feet correspond to specific areas of the body including the organs and glands.

Treatments that focus on the feet are well liked by clients, so these are regularly offered on spa menus. **Pedicure** treatments, which are intended to beautify the skin and nails, are delivered by cosmetologists, estheticians, and **nail technicians**, depending on the laws in the individual state. Massage therapists provide foot treatments that decrease foot pain, revitalize tired feet, enhance or promote relaxation, and support the balance of the body. Although massage therapists cannot provide nail care or services aimed at improving the appearance of the feet (in most states), they can mix and match different treatment elements to create enjoyable services that quickly gain popularity with clients.

A foot treatment consists of basic steps that can be modified to fit the goal and concept of the service being provided. Most foot treatments include a general foot assessment, soaking and cleaning, exfoliation, the application of a treatment product (mud, paraffin, etc.), and basic massage. These fundamental steps are enhanced with massage, reflexology techniques, aromatherapy smell-scapes, and enhancers that address other areas of the body such as the hands and face. The goal of this chapter is to describe each element of a foot treatment and suggest some options for each step. Some specific massage and reflexology techniques will also be discussed so that you have the necessary building blocks in place to create unique foot treatments. Review the sample treatments section at the back of the book for inspiration when you design your own foot spa menu.

General Treatment Considerations

Before giving spa foot treatments to clients, it is important to be aware of possible contraindications, the types of reactions that clients may have to the treatment, and the regulations on reflexology certification. It is also useful to be aware of the positioning techniques that make reflexology less stressful on your body.

Contraindications

If a client has pitted edema, broken bones or fractures, advanced or poorly treated diabetes, neuropathy, deep vein

thrombosis, infections, ingrown toenails, painful corns, gout, warts, or athlete's foot in the area of the lower leg and foot, he or she should not receive a foot treatment. Caution should be used when working with the elderly, clients on multiple medications, and clients who have a compromised circulatory system. Reflexology techniques should only be used on such individuals with light pressure to avoid overstimulation or accelerated elimination symptoms such as nausea, diarrhea, or headache.

Reflexology Certification

The foot spa treatments described in this chapter include reflexology techniques. To become a certified reflexologist requires specialized training. In some states, a specific license is required to practice as a reflexologist, but in other states, reflexologists must also be qualified as massage therapists before they can practice. Massage therapists who are not reflexologists can use “reflexology techniques” during a treatment but should not claim to be reflexologists. The American Reflexology Certification Board (ARCB) is an independent testing agency (<http://www.arcb.net>). They require students to take a hands-on reflexology course of no less than 110 hours and complete 90 postgraduate treatment sessions that have been properly documented using ARCB forms. To obtain the certification, students then have to take a 300-question test and a practical exam.

Possible Reactions to Reflexology

Although negative responses are rare, clients may experience a variety of reactions to reflexology techniques. During the session, the clients may have muscle cramping in the legs and feet, their feet and hands may perspire, and they may feel mildly nauseous or headachy. Some clients respond to reflexology by falling into a deep sleep during the session. Others will experience involuntary jerks of the arms and legs as the nervous system “unwinds.” In all cases, you should monitor the client's comfort level and make necessary adjustments to the degree of pressure that you apply during the treatment.

Therapist and Client Comfort during Reflexology

Set your massage table high enough so that you do not have to hunch over the table while delivering the treatment. The client uses a step stool at the side of the massage table to get on and off the table safely. This is not the only way to position a client for the delivery of reflexology techniques. Some therapists place the client's feet on a stool in front of them. Others place the feet on a pillow to lift them up off the massage table. In this case, the client should be bolstered so that elevating the feet does not place unnecessary stress on the knees.

TABLE 10-1 Elements of a Spa Foot Treatment

TREATMENT ELEMENT	DESCRIPTION
Foot assessment	The foot is evaluated to rule out contraindications and identify areas of particular stress. The shoes of the client might also be appraised so that the therapist can describe to the client how their shoes might be contributing to foot pain or to hip, knee, and lower back conditions.
Soaking and/or cleansing	The feet are soaked in water, usually with a product to soften and clean the skin and to relax the muscles. Sometimes, the feet are not soaked but are washed while the client relaxes on the treatment table.
Exfoliation	A granulated product (estheticians can also use an enzyme or dissolving exfoliant) is rubbed on the feet to remove dead skin cells, smooth the skin's surface, stimulate lymph flow, and increase local circulation.
Callus care	A heavy, specially formulated cream may be massaged into the callus to help reduce it, or a callus file or pumice stone may be rubbed across the callus to remove dead skin (in some states, this is prohibited for the massage therapist).
Massage	The lower legs and feet may be massaged to relax muscles, stimulate lymph and blood flow, decrease pain, and revitalize the feet. A variety of techniques can be used, including hot stone massage, trigger point therapy, and lengthening/strengthening techniques such as active isolated stretching (AIS) and post-isometric relaxation (PIR).
Reflexology	Reflexology techniques may be used to decrease foot pain, increase the flexibility and pliability of the feet, relax the body, revitalize the feet, and balance the body.
Hydrotherapy	Foot soaks at specific temperatures, whirlpool baths, or affusions may be used to treat a specific condition, decrease inflammation, increase blood and lymph flow, and revitalize the feet. See Chapter 6 (Water Therapies).
Treatment product	A treatment product such as mud, seaweed, cocoa butter, or essential oils is applied to the feet and sometimes the lower leg to achieve a specific result (decrease foot pain, decrease of inflammation, stimulation of circulation, revitalization, etc.).
Foot cocoon	The feet and lower leg may be wrapped in a cloth soaked in herbs, heated towels, or thermal booties to warm the tissues or to activate a specific treatment product that has previously been applied to the area.
Finishing product	To end the treatment, a light gel or lotion may be applied to the feet, the feet might be misted with a toner, or a powder might be applied. Often, peppermint lotions are used because they leave the feet feeling tingly and refreshed.

Elements of a Spa Foot Treatment

In the following section, different elements of a spa foot treatment are described along with techniques, variations in products, and alternative delivery steps. When you understand how to deliver each of these elements, you can mix and match options to create unique services. The sample treatment at the end of the book gives examples of how the different elements, products, and delivery steps can be combined. Table 10-1 provides an overview of the basic elements of a foot treatment, whereas the Broaden Your Understanding 10-1 describes the steps in a classic pedicure. Also, for a demonstration of a spa foot treatment, visit thePoint. 

A Quick Foot Assessment

When assessing the feet before a session, look for any obvious contraindications such as a fungal infection or pronounced edema. Corns, **calluses**, and areas of discoloration or dryness are not contraindicated but help you determine where extra stress is being placed on the foot or the body. In reflexology, for example, a callus on the medial side of the big toe might correspond to a client's chronic neck pain and stiffness. Eliminating the cause of the callus (often ill-fitting shoes) and specifically stimulating the area during the treatment may help to decrease the severity of the neck stiffness while relaxing and revitalizing the feet at the same time.



Broaden Your Understanding 10-1 A CLASSIC PEDICURE

In a pedicure, the toenails are groomed, the skin is beautified, and the appearance of the foot is enhanced. This treatment can only be delivered by a professional licensed or certified to provide nail care (a cosmetologist, nail technician, or esthetician, depending on the laws in the particular state). In a classic pedicure, the therapist first removes old polish with acetone (nail polish remover) and then soaks, cleanses, and exfoliates the feet. A heavy, specially formulated cream may be massaged into calluses to help remove them. Alternatively, a callus file or pumice stone may be rubbed across the callus to remove the dead skin. Nail technicians can use a callus shaver to shave off layers of dead skin. This is a potentially dangerous piece of equipment and should only be used by a trained professional. The cuticles are treated with a cuticle cream, which softens the cuticle so that it can be pushed back off the nail. The nail is trimmed and then shaped with an emery board. A foot mask may be applied to soften and purify the skin, and then a light massage is provided. Finally, the nails are polished with a base coat, two coats of color, and a top coat to protect against chipping.

The most common cause of foot pain and dysfunction is ill-fitting shoes.¹ Clients often wear shoes that are one or two sizes too small for their feet. This miss-sizing usually occurs because clients try new shoes on while they are sitting down (nonweight bearing), lace the shoes tightly around their feet, and then stand up and walk around. The shoes hold the foot in a cramped position so that the bones cannot lengthen out into a strong **arch**. Over time, this may lead to foot pain and may contribute to knee, hip, and lower back conditions. It's a good idea to try on shoes in the afternoon when feet are at their largest due to normal swelling. People's feet get wider as they age, so they should expect their foot size to increase over the years.²

The quick foot size test described below is an effective way to determine if a client is wearing a shoe that is too small for his or her feet. This method is adapted from that taught by Bill Runquist, a noted reflexology instructor. To perform the test, the client sits on a chair with his or her bare feet placed a shoulder's width apart. Pieces of cardboard are then placed under each of the client's feet, and the client is asked to stand up. You then trace around each foot onto the pieces of cardboard. Because the client's weight is on the feet and he or she is barefoot, the imprints will indicate the true foot size for which shoes are required.

Cut out the impressions of the feet and attempt to slip them into the client's shoes. If the cardboard impressions do not fit into the client's shoes, the shoes are too small. Ideally, the client would throw away any shoes that do not fit the cardboard impressions. When clients first wear shoes that fit the cardboard impressions, they will often make the comment that the shoe feels too large. This is because it takes some time for the feet to relax back into their natural lengthened positions.

Although this is an oversimplified assessment of what can be a very complex situation, this easy test illustrates for clients the importance of purchasing shoes that are big enough. Clients with persistent foot pain, knee, hip, or lower back pain should be referred to a physician for professional medical assessment and treatment.

Soaking and Cleansing the Feet

Cleansing is required before any foot treatment for hygienic reasons. Different cleansing and soaking methods and equipment are shown in Figure 10-1. In the simplest cleansing method, you wipe off the client's feet before massage with a disposable cleansing wipe such as a diaper wipe. Another simple method is to wet your hands in a bowl of warm water and apply a foaming cleanser to the feet while the client relaxes on the treatment table. The cleanser is removed with hot towels.

A more elegant cleansing might take place in a soaking container with warm water and a soaking additive. The client's feet are soaked for 5 to 10 minutes to soften the muscle tissue, increase local circulation, and relax the body. The feet are pulled out of the water one after the other and washed with a cleanser. Dry the feet with a hand towel before the client is moved to a treatment table for the rest of the service.

Some spas have expensive pedicure equipment with a reclining chair attached to a multijet hydrotherapy foot tub. The client's feet remain immersed in the tub for much of the treatment and are pulled out and placed on a foot rest when necessary during the service. This type of equipment is ideal for a pedicure, but it is not strictly necessary for a foot treatment delivered by a massage therapist. A cheaper option is to use a foot soak basin and purchase a pedicure chair with an attached foot rest. You can now work on the client's feet from a seated position rather than being down on your knees when cleansing and drying the feet during the soaking and cleansing step.

The presentation and style of the foot soak is important. Large decorative basins with whole flower petals or leaves floating on the surface of the water create an attractive display and add a sensation of luxury and indulgence. A cup of herbal tea on a side table, relaxing lighting, and soothing music add to the experience. The clients might also be offered a shoulder and neck massage while their feet are soaking.

In a third method, the foot soak is delivered while the client relaxes on the massage table. The client's legs are propped up with a large wedge or bolster. The foot soaking basin is placed at the end of the table on top of a bath towel and a hand towel. The client places his or her feet into the bowl for the treatment and then lifts them out at the end of the soak. You remove the container of water and place the client's feet on top of a preset hand towel to be dried. In this case, a plastic dish bowl is ideal for the soaking container. Large decorative containers are difficult to lift and maneuver in this type of a soak.

Additives such as Epsom salt, seaweed powder, and essential oils can increase the therapeutic benefit of a foot soak while helping to cleanse the feet of impurities. Table 10-2 provides an overview of some of the additives that might be used in the foot soak or cleansing step.



SANITATION

Any soaking basin that contains jets must be flushed with a small amount of bleach or an approved sanitation product between clients. This is also true for decorative items such as marbles or polished stones added to the soaking basin. Basins without jets should be washed with hot, soapy water; dried and sprayed with alcohol; and then left to air dry. Careful sanitation of foot soaking containers is very important because this is often an area where bacteria can grow and spread between clients.³

Exfoliation

Buff the feet during the soaking process by lifting one foot out of the tub at a time and applying an exfoliant cream or loofah mitt to the sole of the foot and the heel. A callus file or pumice stone can be rubbed across calluses while the feet are wet in some states. If the client is positioned on the



FIGURE 10-1 Cleansing and soaking the feet. **(A)** Cleansing with a disposable diaper wipe. **(B1 and B2)** Cleaning with a cleanser and hot, moist towels. **(C)** Soaking in a decorative tub while seated. **(D)** Soaking while positioned on the treatment table. **(E)** Professional multijet foot soak. **(F)** Foot soak basin and pedicure chair.

TABLE 10-2 Additives for a Foot Soak

ADDITIVE	GENERAL PROPERTIES	HOW MUCH TO USE
Epsom salt	Traditionally used as a soaking agent for sprained or bruised muscles and to decrease muscular pain and stiffness.	½ cup to 1 cup, depending on the size of the soaking unit
Sea salt	Sea salts are skin softening and relaxing. Dead Sea salts aid psoriasis, eczema, and arthritis and are pain relieving.	½ cup to 1 cup, depending on the size of the soaking unit
Seaweed	Seaweed powder is stimulating for blood and lymph flow, detoxifying, and revitalizing.	1 tsp is dissolved in hot water, and the mixture is poured into the tub.
Clay	Clay is soothing, softening, and relaxing. Certain clays such as those derived from sea sediments or volcanic areas may remineralize through absorption.	The amount used is at the discretion of the therapist. One tablespoon (softens and colors the water), whereas larger amounts can create a runny but enjoyable “soup.”
Mud or peat	Mud or peat can be added in moderate amounts to cool water temperatures to support the decrease of inflammatory conditions and refresh the feet.	1 cup or more; some treatments may call for the feet to be soaked in undiluted mud or peat (although this is expensive).
Foamy soaking product	Spa suppliers carry a variety of scented foaming soaking products for the feet. Sometimes, these products contain dyes that color the water. Clients who are sensitive to synthetic fragrances may prefer a more natural additive such as clay or sea salt.	Usually, 1 tbsp is added and then frothed up with the hands. Follow the product directions if they are provided.
Fizzy soaking product	Fizzy soaking products are placed in the water and fizz when they dissolve like an Alka-Seltzer. They are often scented and contain dyes to color the water.	Read the product directions to determine how much product to add to a soaking tub.
Herbal infusions	Herbal infusions can be added to the foot bath to refresh the feet and senses. The same herbal mixture that is used for the herbal body wrap can be used in the foot bath. <i>Eucalyptus</i> leaf, juniper berry, clove buds, calendula, and rosemary leaf make a nice combination.	To make an herbal infusion, place ½ cup of dried herbs in a muslin bag or metal tea ball and cover with a quart of boiling water. Allow the mixture to steep for 15 minutes before it is added to the foot bath.
Essential oils	Essential oils have numerous properties that can be used in a foot soak. The therapist adds the oils after the client’s feet are immersed in the water to prevent premature evaporation of the oils.	Cover the client’s feet with essential oils diluted in a fixed oil and then place them into a foot soak basin of warm water.
Powdered milk and honey	Powdered milk, buttermilk, full-fat milk, and honey make a soothing, softening, and relaxing foot soak.	Add ½ cup of powdered milk or 1 cup of regular or buttermilk and ½ cup of honey to the foot soak basin of warm water.
Other	A variety of other professional soaking products with different properties are available through spa suppliers.	Follow product directions.

massage table, you can wet your hands in warm water and apply the exfoliation product directly to the feet and then remove it with a hot towel.



SANITATION

Callus-reducing files or other implements used on the feet should be washed in hot, soapy water at the end of the treatment; soaked for 20 minutes in alcohol; and left to air dry before being returned to a closed cabinet.

Foot Massage

One of the things that sets massage therapist apart from other therapists delivering services at a spa is the depth and

variety of the massage strokes that they use in a treatment. Few treatments are more relaxing and satisfying than an exceptional foot massage. You may already have an exceptional foot routine, but if you are still developing your skills, you may find the techniques offered below helpful (Fig. 10-2). Many of the strokes outlined here are taught by Geraldine Thompson and Lisa Hensel at the Seattle School of Reflexology. To view a video demonstration of a foot massage routine, visit thePoint. [▶](#)

The Sandwich Slide

Lace your fingers and stand on the lateral side of the foot facing toward the table. Slide your interlaced fingers down the medial edge of the foot to the heel and then back up to the starting position. The emphasis is on the downward stroke. Repeat this technique up to 15 times.



FIGURE 10-2 Foot massage techniques. **(A)** Sandwich slide. **(B)** Folded hands glide. **(C)** Circular thumbs on the top of the foot. **(D)** Circular palms around the ankle. **(E)** Achilles stroke. **(F)** Circular thumbs on the bottom of the foot. **(G)** Metatarsal pull. **(H)** Stone scrape. **(I)** Metatarsal stone roll. (*continued*)



FIGURE 10-2 (continued) **(J)** Transverse thumb slide. **(K)** Rotation of all toes. **(L)** Circular finger friction. **(M)** Spinal twist. **(N)** Lung press. **(O)** Solar plexus hold. **(P)** Laced fingers hold. **(Q1 and Q2)** Bounce-bounce-traction. Lift the legs and bounce them on the massage table three times. Lean back while holding the ankles and swing the legs right and left.

Folded Hands Glide

Place one hand on top of the other with your thumbs to the outside and hold your elbows close to your body so that you can use your body weight to facilitate the stroke. With the edge of your hands contacting the ball of the foot (directly over the metatarsal heads), push the foot into **dorsiflexion**. Once the foot is dorsiflexed, run the edge of your hands down the plantar surface of the foot and around the heel, pulling the foot into **plantar flexion** at the end of the stroke. Repeat this stroke 10 times. You may notice that this stroke is difficult to perform with good body mechanics because it causes a pronounced wrist deviation. Holding your elbows close to your body and using your body weight to facilitate this stroke is important. Although this stroke is really popular with clients, you must determine if you can provide it without injury or undue stress on your body.

Circular Thumbs on Top of the Foot

Starting at the distal part of the foot, use circular motions with your thumbs down the dorsal surface of the foot. Repeat this stroke three to six times.

Circular Palms around the Ankle

Apply moderate pressure in circular motions around the ankle with the palms of your hands.

Achilles Stroke

Run one hand up the anterior surface of the lower leg and the other down the posterior surface of the lower leg, traction the ankle at the end of the posterior leg stroke.

Circular Thumbs on the Bottom of the Foot

Apply circular friction with your thumbs from the heel to the toes. Repeat this stroke three to six times combined with the metatarsal pull described next.

Metatarsal Pull

As you approach the top of the foot with circular thumbs, gently grab around the first metatarsal head with one hand and around the fifth metatarsal head with the other. The fingers fall into the groves created by the metatarsals. Loosen the foot in a seasaw motion to complete this stroke.

Stone Scrape

Using the flat edge of a warm stone, scrape from the solar plexus point (the point directly beneath the ball of the foot) to the heel in a straight, even motion and repeat this technique 6 to 10 times.

Metatarsal Stone Roll

Place the edge of the warm stone in between the fifth and fourth metatarsal and roll upward three or four times. Repeat this stroke between each of the metatarsals.

Transverse Thumb Slide

Apply thumb friction in a crossing pattern from the bottom of the toes to the heel. When you reach the heel, begin again

at the top of the foot or use circular thumb friction to create a smooth transition. Repeat this stroke three to six times.

Rotation of All Toes

Stabilize the foot with one hand while the other rotates all of the toes in a circle. Repeat, rotating the toes in the opposite direction. This stroke is followed by a toe twist in which each toe is lightly twisted back and forth while gentle traction is applied. You want to be careful not to pull too hard on the toes, which may cause the client discomfort.

Circular Finger Friction

With the thumbs on the plantar surface of the foot, circle the fingers down the sides of the foot using firm pressure. Repeat this stroke three to six times.

Spinal Twist

Stand at the end of the table in the center, facing out over the foot. Place your hand that is closest to the table on the base of the ankle and stabilize the foot. The outer hand twists the distal tarsals, metatarsals, and phalanges outward, moving the outer hand up the foot but leaving the lower hand firmly in place.

Lung Press

Make a fist with your inside hand and place it against the ball of the foot. The outside hand stabilizes the foot on the dorsal surface. Using a rhythmic motion, plantar flex and dorsiflex the foot to loosen it and stimulate the lung reflexes.

To end a massage session, one or all of the following techniques might be used.

Solar Plexus Hold

Sit holding one foot in each hand. Your thumbs are positioned so that they rest on the point directly below the ball of the foot known as the solar plexus point. This is associated with deep breathing and calm. Ask the client to take three deep breaths while you apply firm pressure to this point on both feet at the same time.

Laced Fingers Hold

Place the fingertips of each hand on the plantar surface of the foot, lacing them almost but not actually in between each toe. Hang onto the foot as if you are hanging onto a ledge with just your fingertips. Hold this position and ask the client to take three deep breaths.

Bounce-Bounce-Traction

Standing at the end of the table in the center, hold each leg just above the foot. Lift the legs and bounce them on the massage table three times. Bring your hands around the leg so that you can lean backward and traction at the ankles while swinging the legs right and left. This releases the sacroiliac joint and relaxes the lower back. Repeat this sequence three to four times. Avoid this technique if the client has lower back, hip, pelvic, knee, or ankle problems.

Follow the foot massage routine with reflexology techniques to help bring the whole body into a relaxed and balanced body and mind state.

Reflexology

Reflexology is a therapy that is based on belief that there are points in the feet, hands, and ears that stimulate the function of different parts of the body, including the glands and organs. It is most often used as a preventive therapy that aims to soothe the nervous system, reduce stress, improve circulation, and create the optimum internal environment for balanced energy, rest, and recovery. The goal is that the body can draw on its natural healing ability because it is in a relaxed and balanced state.

Although hands, ears, and feet can all be manipulated to improve health and well-being, it is the feet that receive the most attention. The feet are very important because of their rich supply of superficial nerve endings (7,000 in each foot). The feet connect us to the earth and support our bodies with an intricate structure that consists of 26 bones, 33 joints, 19 muscles, and 107 ligaments. In addition, circulation tends to stagnate in the feet because they are farthest from the heart. Inorganic waste materials such as uric acid and calcium turn to crystalline deposits that can build up in the bottom of the feet. Reflexologists focus on working every surface of the foot to decrease muscle tension and pain, increase local circulation, loosen the foot so that it is more flexible and mobile, and stimulate the flow of energy through the body.

Modern reflexology owes its development to an American doctor named William Fitzgerald, who developed a comprehensive method for working the feet in the early 20th century. Dr. Fitzgerald discovered that when he applied gentle pressure to the feet, other areas of the body were affected. He called his work zone therapy and mapped out 10 zones in the body that could be accessed by massaging the feet or hands. When a zone on the feet or hands is manipulated, any gland or organ falling in the path of that zone is positively affected. Although reflex zones can be compared to meridians, it should be understood that although the two systems are based on similar ideas, the underlying philosophy is different.

Eunice Ingham, an American physical therapist, became interested in Fitzgerald's methods while working with Dr. Riley. She worked on a variety of patients over a number of years and kept detailed notes on her findings. She charted each body area on the foot and, through trial and error, created an intricate map that shows the placement of reflex points for each gland and organ in the body. She is credited by many as being the first person to create an anatomical model of foot reflexes in which the feet are a mirror image of the body.

Ingham published her work in 1938 in a book entitled *Stories the Feet Can Tell Thru Reflexology* and toured the country teaching her methods until the age of 80 years.⁴ Her

nephew, Dwight C. Byers, currently runs the International Institute of Reflexology, which counts its membership in the thousands.⁵ The Ingham Method of Reflexology is a registered trademark of Dwight Byers and the International Institute of Reflexology.

Reflexology Techniques

The most common technique used in reflexology is “thumb walking” (Fig. 10-3). To thumb walk, use the edge of your thumb in an inchworm motion to take small “bites” out of the area you are working. Your pressure is steady and firm. To practice the technique, walk your thumb up your forearm. Finger walking is similar to the thumb walk except that the edge of the index finger is used, and the pressure is usually gentler. The hook and back up technique is used to stimulate a specific point. The thumb is used to apply direct pressure to the point and is then pulled back slightly to hook the point (think of taking slack out of fascia). The point will then be “reactivated” with direct pressure again. Sometimes, a therapist will rotate his or her thumb on a point as a way of stimulating the point.

In general, when you identify a tender area, you give it focused attention. Although the pressure is firm, it should not feel unbearable. Areas of tenderness may relate to what is considered “congestion” in the corresponding glands and organs of the body. It is important to remember that the foot is a complex structure, prone to adhesions, hypertonicities, and inflammations, just as the rest of the body is. Congestion in an area does not necessarily indicate pathology, and you should be careful not to



FIGURE 10-3 Thumb walking technique.

alarm the client by relating tenderness specifically to an organ or gland.

A Stress Reduction Reflexology Routine

The amount of reflexology you use in a spa foot treatment is left to your discretion or that of a treatment designer at the spa where you work. The routine described below takes approximately 25 minutes and works nicely when preceded by a 10-minute foot massage. This treatment focuses on

“clearing the zones” and working on specific reflex points that can be activated to decrease stress and balance the body. A snapshot of the routine is provided in Treatment Overview 10-1 and shown in Figure 10-4.

Session Start

The client is supine on the treatment table with his or her feet at the very end of the table. He or she is covered by a bath sheet or blanket for warmth. Place a pillow under the client’s head and bolster his or her knees. You



FIGURE 10-4 A core reflexology routine. **(A)** Massage the feet. **(B)** Solar plexus hold. **(C)** Clear the zones. **(D1 and D2)** Spinal walk. Walk the spinal reflexes from the bottom up and then from the top down. **(E)** Thumb walk the toes. *(continued)*



FIGURE 10-4 (continued) **(F)** Pituitary press. **(G)** Thumb walk the horizontal lines. Thumb walk each horizontal line from zone 5 to zone 1. For longer sessions, walk the spaces in between the lines working horizontally across the plantar surface of the foot. **(H)** Thyroid press. **(I)** Adrenal gland press. **(J)** Thumb walk the lung reflexes. **(K)** Solar plexus hold—transition to the other foot.

may choose to place a pillow under the client's feet to elevate them in order to make technique application easier on your body. Clean the feet with a disposable wipe such as a diaper wipe or with foaming cleanser and hot, moist towels.

Step 1: Massage the Feet

Warm the feet with massage techniques before the reflexology session. When you have finished the foot massage,

remove the lubricant from the feet with a hot, moist towel or diaper wipe. The feet need to be dry or else your thumb will slip over the reflex points instead of grab them.

Step 2: Solar Plexus Hold

Sit down, place your hands in the correct position for the solar plexus hold as described previously, and ask the client to take three long, slow deep breaths. Release and cover one foot.

Treatment Overview 10-1: A Reflexology Routine



Indications

Stress, general relaxation, low energy, sore or tired feet

Contraindications

Pitted edema, broken bones or fractures, advanced or poorly treated diabetes, infections, ingrown toenails, painful corns, gout, warts, or athlete's foot

Supplies for the Treatment Table Setup (from the bottom layer to the top layer)

1. Massage sheet
2. Bath towel situated horizontally at the bottom of the treatment table where the client's feet will sit
3. Top massage sheet
4. Blanket or bath sheet for warmth
5. Pillow for the client's head
6. Bolster

Supplies for the Work Table Setup

1. Antiseptic wipe such as a diaper wipe
2. Two hot, moist towels
3. Soda cooler
4. Massage cream
5. Dry hand towel
6. Aroma mist
7. Essential oils (optional)

Procedure

1. Cleanse the feet with a diaper wipe or cleanser and hot towels.
2. Massage.
3. Remove the massage cream from the feet.
4. Clear the zones.
5. Reflex specific points associated with relaxation.

Step 3: Clear the Zones

Cover the entire plantar surface of the foot when you clear the zones. Figure 10-5 shows 10 zones on the bottom of the feet and the areas of the body to which they correspond. To clear the zones, thumb walk each zone from the heel to the top of the toe in that zone. It may take two to three passes over a zone before you feel the tissue soften. When you feel an area of particular tension, thumb walk it repeatedly until it feels noticeably softer.

Step 4: Spinal Walk

Using Figure 10-6C, identify the spinal reflexes. They are on the inside of both feet at the medial edge of zone 1. Thumb walk from the heel to the base of the big toe. Turn the hand over and support the plantar surface of the foot. Thumb walk from the base of the big toe to the heel. Repeat the stimulation of the spinal reflexes until the tissue softens.

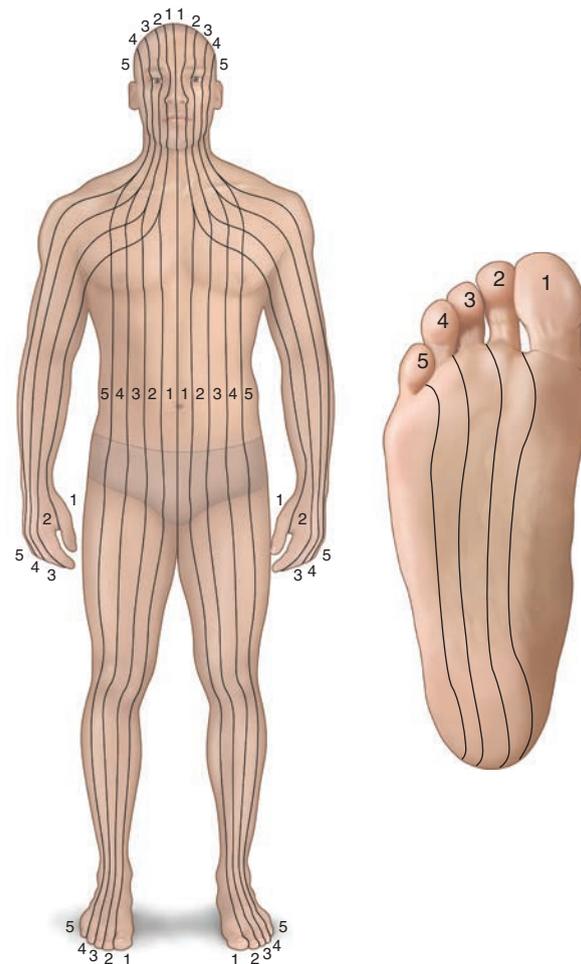


FIGURE 10-5 The 10 zones.

Step 5: Thumb Walk the Toes

Support the foot with one hand and thumb walk the toes with the other hand in a technique sometimes referred to as “biting the toes.” Bite the big toe first making five passes down the toe with 15 bites per pass. Repeat this process on each toe until the little toe and make three passes down the little toe with 10 bites per pass. To finish the toes, roll the knuckle of a finger over each of the brain reflexes at the top of each toe.

Step 6: Pituitary Press

Hook and back up on the pituitary reflex point (Fig. 10-6A). You might also hold this point for up to 2 minutes using direct pressure on the point. If you wish to add aromatherapy to the treatment place a drop of lemon, pine, or myrrh essential oils (all reputed to balance the pituitary gland) on this point.

Step 7: Thumb Walk the Horizontal Lines

Using Figure 10-7, identify the horizontal lines on the plantar surface of the foot. These lines include the shoulder line, diaphragm line, waist line, and pelvic line. Thumb walk each line horizontally from zone 5 to zone 1 and then again from zone 1 to zone 5. In a longer reflexology session,

the areas in between each line are also thumb walked in a cross pattern so that the entire plantar surface of the foot has again been stimulated and softened.

Step 8: Thyroid Press

Thumb walk the area associated with the thyroid point. Hook and back up on the area at the base of the big toe (Fig. 10-4H). You can also hold this point with direct pressure for up to 2 minutes. A dot of pine oil or seaweed essential oil can be placed on this point after it has been stimulated.

Step 9: Adrenal Gland

Apply direct pressure for up to 2 minutes to the adrenal gland reflex, which is located below the solar plexus, above the kidney, and toward the medial side of the foot (Fig. 10-4I). A drop of rose, pine, or rosemary essential oil can be placed on this point after it has been stimulated.

Step 10: Thumb Walk the Lungs

Beginning at the diaphragm line in zone 5, thumb walk diagonally across the lung reflexes to the base of the big toe. Next, thumb walk from the diaphragm line in zone 1 to the base of the little toe. Thumb walk from the diaphragm line in zone 4, diagonally across the lung reflexes to the base of the

second toe. Thumb walk from the diaphragm line in zone 2 diagonally, across the lung reflexes to the base of the fourth toe (Fig. 10-4J). The hand that is not thumb walking is always supporting the foot and holding it upright and open.

Step 11: Solar Plexus Hold and Transition to the Other Foot

Take hold of the solar plexus point on both feet and take three deep breaths together with the client. Cover the foot you just finished and repeat the routine on the other foot. At the end of the reflexology session, take hold of the solar plexus point and ground the energy between both feet before moving on to the next section of the treatment or ending the session.

Designing a Reflexology Routine

By starting with steps 1 to 7 and then focusing on specific points in a systematic manner, a reflexology routine can be designed to suit most clients. For example, if a detoxification routine is indicated, steps 1 to 7 are completed and then you thumb walk or use direct pressure on the kidney, spleen, stomach, and colon points on the left foot and the kidney, liver, gallbladder, and colon points on the right foot

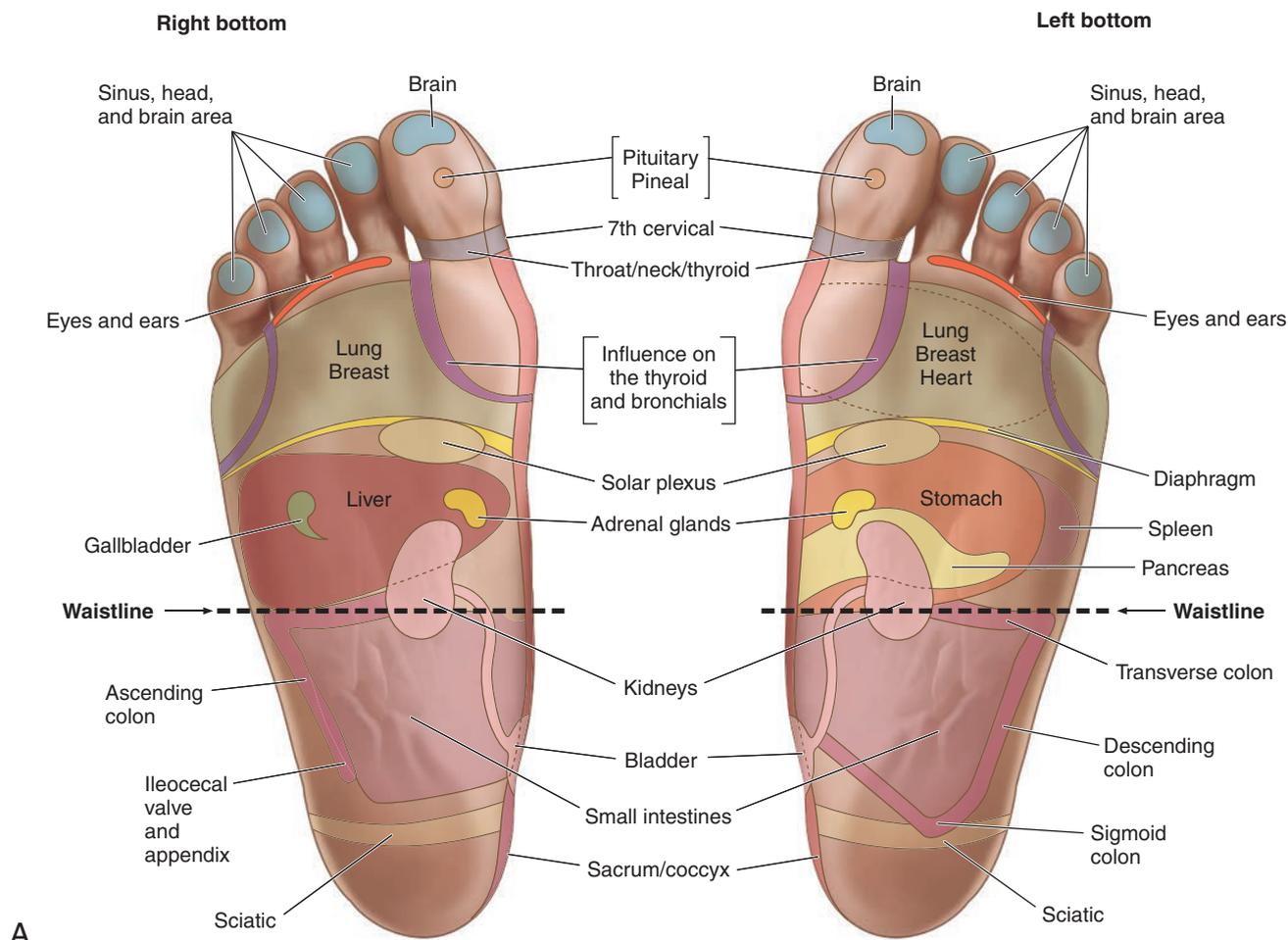


FIGURE 10-6 Overview of reflex points on the feet. (A) Reflexes on the bottom of the feet. (continued)

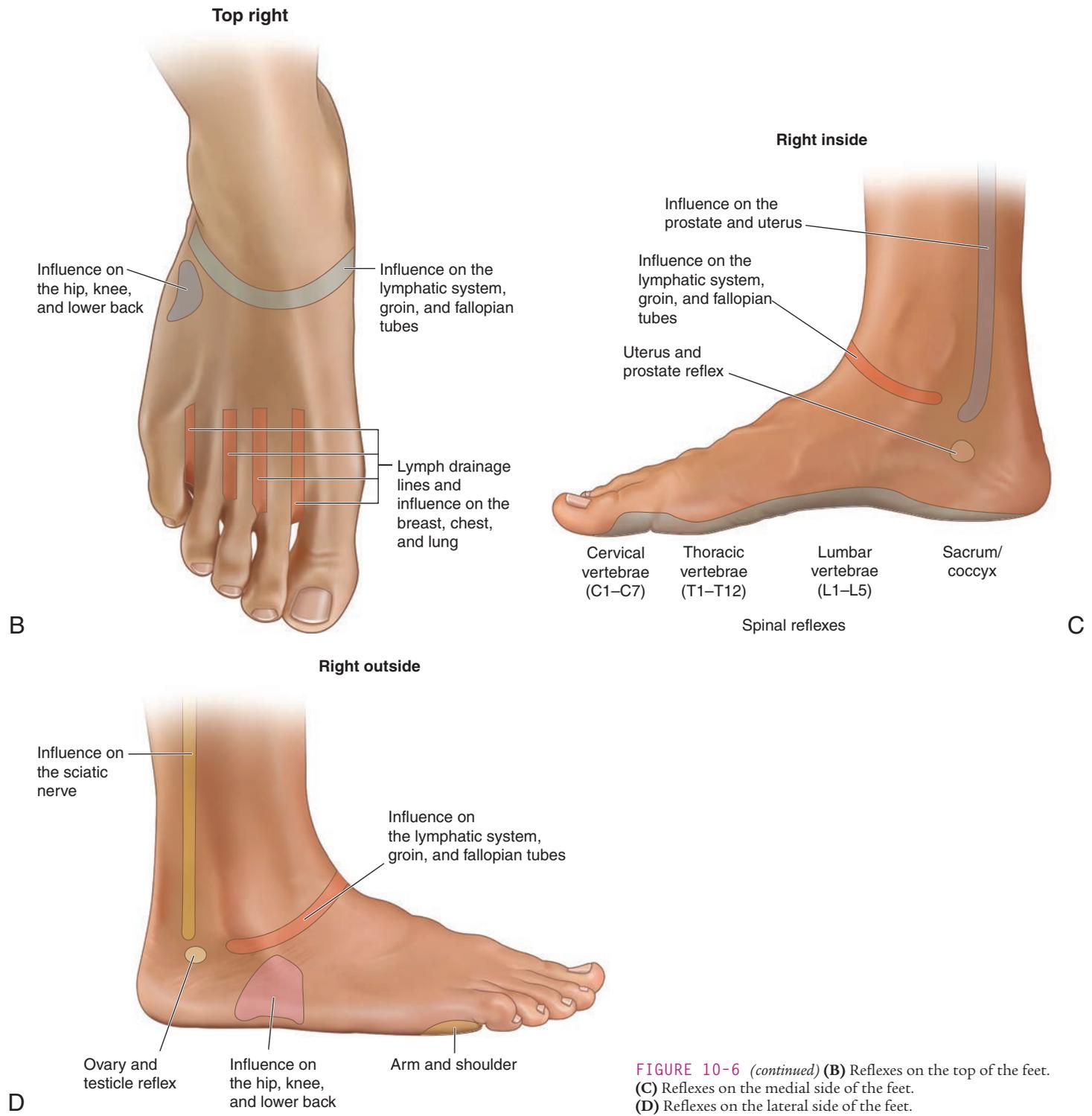


FIGURE 10-6 (continued) **(B)** Reflexes on the top of the feet. **(C)** Reflexes on the medial side of the feet. **(D)** Reflexes on the lateral side of the feet.

(Fig. 10-6A). Figure 10-8 shows some of the essential oils that are believed to have an affinity for each point.

Treatment Products

Treatment products are sometimes applied as a mask to the feet and lower legs to stimulate local circulation to the skin of the leg and foot, to warm the feet, or to soften

the tissue. The physiological effect of the mask is different based on the type of product that you use. Table 10-3 provides an overview of different masking products you might choose for a foot treatment. Before the treatment, unless the treatment product is designed to be applied cold, a sufficient amount is removed from its original container and placed into a covered holding container, which is kept warm in a suitable heater (a lotion warmer,

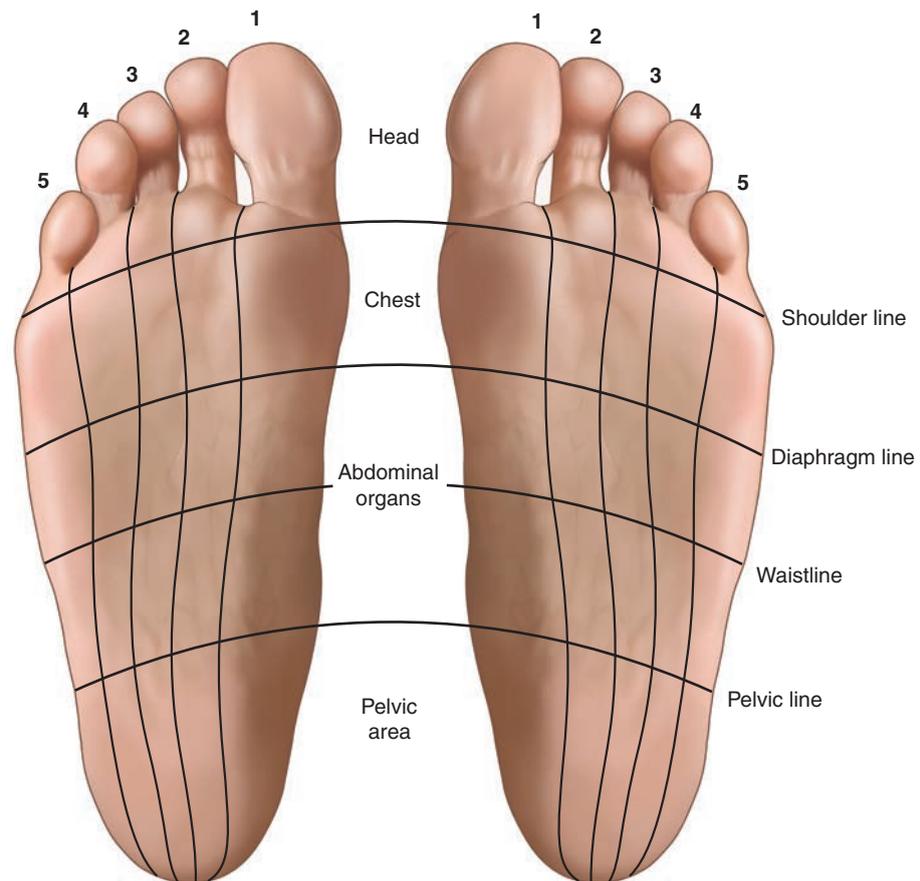


FIGURE 10-7 The horizontal lines on the bottom of the feet.

a hot stone heating unit filled with warm water, a double boiler, etc.).

A small amount of petroleum jelly or thick, waxy cream is applied to the **cuticle** and nail, covering the gap between the nail and the flesh on the tips of the toes completely. This prevents the treatment product from entering that gap and making the nail appear dirty or stained.

A piece of cellophane wrap or an open plastic bag is placed under each foot before the treatment product is applied (Fig. 10-9). This prevents messy treatment product from getting on the treatment table. After the product has been applied, the cellophane wrap or plastic bag is used to cover the foot, keep the product moist, and prevent the product from getting all over the place.

You can apply the treatment product with a gloved hand, a brush, fabric, or gauze strip coated with product, or you can dip the client's foot into the product. To apply the product by hand, wear vinyl gloves, dip the fingers into the warm product, and smooth it evenly over the entire foot.

If you choose to use a brush to apply the product, clean each foot by lifting it by the metatarsal heads and covering the heel with product first. Place the heel down on top of a piece of cellophane into the opening of a plastic bag. Now, cover the top of the foot with product and bring the cellophane or plastic bag up and around the foot to wrap it.

You might choose to dip gauze strips into the product and wrap the coated strips around each foot. In this case,

the product must be thick enough to cling to the gauze and not drip all over the floor and treatment table.

Sometimes, therapists dip a client's foot directly into a container of product as might occur with paraffin. This works best if the client is in a seated position so that the product container can be held directly under the client's foot. Dipping can also be used if the client is in a supine position but this can be a bit tricky. Bring the client's knee up toward his or her chest and then place the leg down along the side of the table, controlling the leg as you lower it so that it doesn't bump into the table. Bring the product container up underneath the client's foot. If the client is not very flexible, he or she may need to be moved to the edge of the table so that the leg is not overstretched as it is dropped over the side. All the shuffling from side to side feels a bit ungraceful and does not allow the client to relax completely.



SANITATION

If the foot is dipped (e.g., for a paraffin dip), it should be misted with alcohol before it is dipped to prevent cross-contamination between clients.

Once the feet are covered in product, wrap them up in cellophane or a plastic bag and slip them into thermal booties (electric booties or microwavable booties) or warm towels.

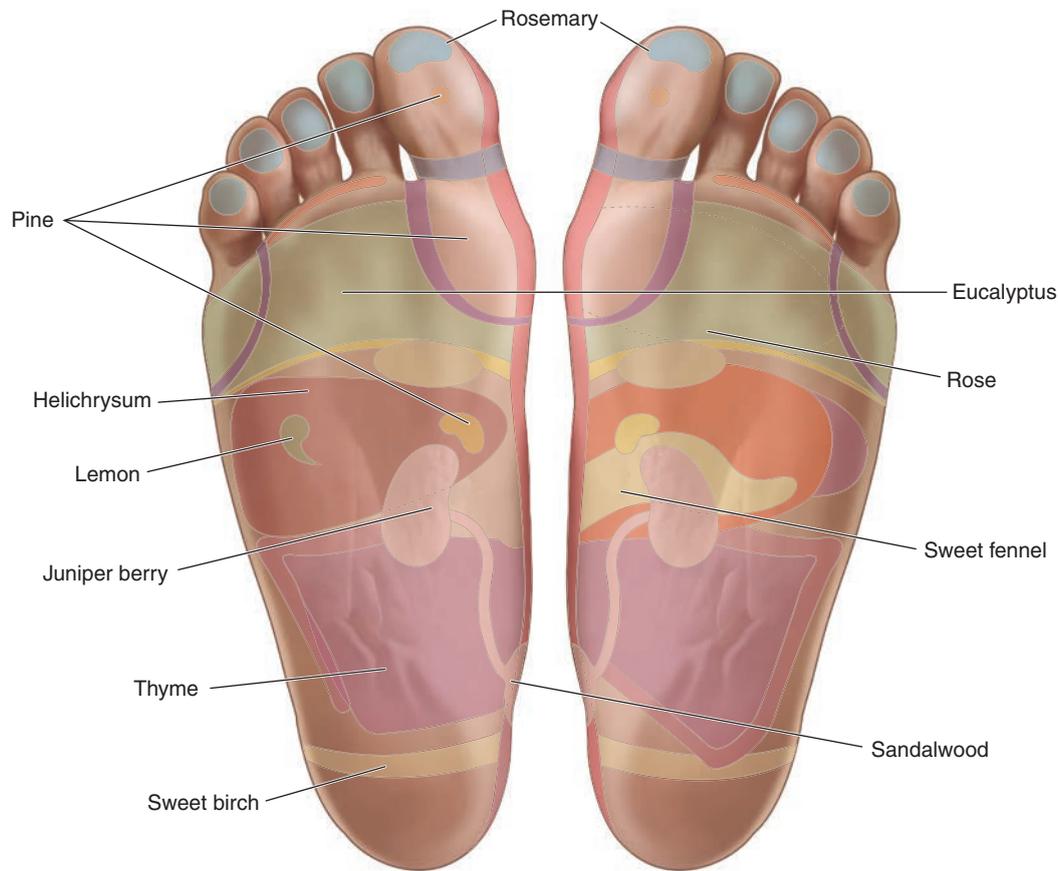


FIGURE 10-8 Sample essential oils for the reflex points.

TABLE 10-3 Foot Treatment Products

PRODUCT	BASIC THERAPEUTIC PROPERTIES
Lightening serum	Lightening serums are used to decrease skin discoloration, decrease age spots, and smooth the skin's surface. In most states, they can only be used by an esthetician or cosmetologist. Lightening serums make an excellent retail item for the gift shop.
Seaweed	Powdered seaweed can be mixed with a number of ingredients to make stimulating, detoxifying, and toning foot masks. Massage oil, water, kaolin clay, aloe gel, lotion, and essential oils can all be mixed up with seaweed powders.
Fitness gels	Fitness gels are usually sold for use on the body. They often contain menthol or <i>Eucalyptus</i> , which is pain relieving and refreshing. These products make revitalizing foot masks. The gels can be mixed up with kaolin clay to give them additional weight and heaviness for use as a treatment product.
Clay	Clay powder can be mixed with a number of different ingredients to make foot masks. Gel seaweed, aloe gel, massage oil, water, lotion and ground herbs, yogurt, fruit juices, and essential oils can all be mixed with clay powders.
Moor mud	Moor mud is a thick, rich peat that is well known for its anti-inflammatory properties. It is a good choice for sore feet or arthritis.
Dead Sea mud	Dead Sea mud is high in sulfur and is used for foot pain, inflammation, and arthritis.
Cryogenic products	Cryogenic or "ice" masks are cooling and pain relieving. They are revitalizing for sore, tired feet.
Paraffin and Parafango	Paraffin and Parafango masks are warming and soothing. They are often used for arthritis or to soften and smooth the skin.
Essential oils	Essential oils can be mixed into a clay base to provide a wide range of different therapeutic effects in the feet. For example, 6 drops of juniper berry essential oil can be mixed up with clay for a detoxifying mask. Two to 4 drops of peppermint makes a revitalizing mask. Eight to 10 drops of German chamomile mixed with kaolin clay and hemp seed massage oil make a good mask for foot puffiness.
Other	A variety of other professional masking products with different properties are available through spa suppliers.



FIGURE 10-9 Placing a piece of cellophane under the foot before application of the treatment product.

While the product is processing on the feet, cleanse, exfoliate, and massage the hands and then dip them in paraffin. Massage the neck, shoulders, and face or treat the scalp to a massage with conditioning product.



SANITATION

After working with the feet, wash and sanitize your hands before touching any other part of the body to minimize the spread of an undetected fungal or bacterial infection.

There are two main ways to remove treatment product in a dry room setting. You might resoak the feet by placing them into a fresh foot soaking container, or you can remove the product with hot towels. With heavy mud and thick seaweed, a second foot bath works well. With easy-to-remove masks such as shea butter or light clay, hot towels are quicker and easier. Take special care to wipe off the toenails (if you covered them in petroleum jelly before you applied the treatment product, cleaning the toenails is easier). If you used heated booties to warm the treatment product, make sure to remove them within 20 minutes, elevate the feet on a pillow, and apply light flushing strokes to encourage fluid to move toward the heart. Otherwise, the limb may feel swollen and heavy at the conclusion of the session.

Finishing Products

Finish the foot service by applying a gel, light lotion, cooling aroma foot mist, or foot powder to the feet. Choose finishing

products based on your treatment concept (described in detail in Chapter 15). For example, a treatment for athletes with foot pain might finish with a medicated foot powder, whereas a soothing treatment aimed at relaxation may use a lavender lotion instead. Wipe the feet with a dry hand towel after they have been moisturized to remove any excess product, especially if the spa has tiled floors. Excess product can cause a client to slip and fall when he or she gets off the massage table.

A Sample Foot Treatment Procedure

The treatment described below shows just one way that the different elements of a foot treatment might be organized into an enjoyable session. Change the order of steps or the treatment elements to suit your treatment goals and concept. For example, the massage step could come before the application of the treatment product, as it does in this sample, or after the application of the treatment product. For a snapshot of this foot treatment, review Treatment Overview 10-2 and Figure 10-10.

Session Start

With the client in a robe and seated in a comfortable chair, soak the feet in a decorative container that is filled with warm water and a soaking additive. A side table holds a cup of warm herbal tea. Place a hand towel, a nailbrush, cleansing product, disposable or washable slippers, and an exfoliation product to the side of the chair within easy reach. A pedicure seat and a foot rest are placed in front of the foot soaking basin.

Step 1: Soak and Cleanse

Provide a neck and shoulder massage while the client soaks his or her feet. After this, take one foot out of the soak and place it on the foot rest. Apply a cleanser and gently scrub the nails with a nailbrush. Put the first foot back in the foot soak container and repeat this process with the second foot.

Step 2: Exfoliation

Take the first foot out of the soak and place it on the foot rest. Apply an exfoliation product and scrub the foot. Rub a callus file across rough areas of the heel to the tolerance of the client if the laws of your state allow it. Callus files can feel too ticklish for some clients. If the client is ticklish, simply skip this step. Put the first foot back in the foot soak container and repeat this process with the second foot. Alternatively, the foot soak and exfoliation can take place on the treatment table.

Step 3: Move the Client to the Treatment Table

Remove the client's feet from the soaking basin, place them on a hand towel, and dry them. Slip the client's feet into

Treatment Overview 10-2: A Sample Spa Foot Treatment



Indications

Relaxation; foot pain; sore, tired feet; low energy; stress

Contraindications

Pitted edema, broken bones or fractures, infections, ingrown toenails, painful corns, gout, warts, athlete's foot, neuropathy, circulatory conditions

Supplies for the Treatment Table Setup (from the bottom to the top layer)

1. Massage sheet
2. Bath towel set horizontally at the bottom of the massage table
3. Top massage sheet
4. Blanket or bath sheet for warmth
5. Pillow for the client's head
6. Bolster

Supplies for the Foot Soak Setup

1. Comfortable chair for the client
2. Side table with a beverage such as hot herbal tea or lemonade
3. Pedicure chair with foot rest for the therapist (optional)
4. Foot soak container placed on top of a hand towel and filled with warm water and a soaking additive
5. Cleanser
6. Robe and slippers
7. Dry hand towel

Supplies for the Work Table Setup

1. Exfoliation product
2. Massage cream
3. Diaper wipes
4. Petroleum jelly
5. Treatment product
6. Application brush or vinyl gloves
7. Soda cooler
8. Hot, moist towels
9. Cellophane wrap or plastic bags
10. Thermal booties plugged in
11. Finishing product
12. Aroma mist
13. Paraffin dip plugged in
14. Essential oils (optional)

Procedure

1. Soak and cleanse the feet.
2. Exfoliate the feet.
3. Move the client to the treatment table.
4. Provide a foot massage.
5. Provide reflexology techniques.
6. Apply treatment product.
7. Massage hands and arms and dip in paraffin.
8. Remove the treatment product from the feet.
9. Apply a finishing product to the feet using flushing strokes.
10. Remove the paraffin from the hands and apply flushing strokes up the arms.
11. Provide an aura mist.

disposable or washable slippers and escort him or her to the massage table. Cover the client (who is still in a robe) with blankets for warmth. You need to ask the client to position him- or herself with the feet at the very end of the massage table because this makes reflexology easier to apply.

Step 4: Foot Massage

Place a warm pack over the drape on the client's abdominal area for warmth and an eye pillow over the eyes to eliminate excess light. Massage the feet and legs using a variety of strokes or the routine described previously.

Step 5: Reflexology

Remove the lubricant from the client's feet with a diaper wipe or hot, moist towels and apply reflexology techniques to both feet. Stimulate specific reflexology points based on the treatment goals for the session. Essential oils can be dotted on specific reflex points to incorporate aromatherapy into the session.

Step 6: Application of a Treatment Product

Choose a treatment product based on a treatment concept and/or to support the achievement of specific treatment goals. For example, seaweed is a perfect choice if you want to support increased vital body energy. Moor mud is a great choice if the goal is to decrease foot pain or inflammation in the feet. A treatment that aims to revitalize tired feet might apply a tingly peppermint mask.

Apply petroleum jelly to the cuticle and nail and to the space between the nail and the flesh of each toe. This prevents treatment product from lodging in this space and making the toenails appear dirty at the end of the service.

Place a piece of cellophane under each foot before the treatment product is applied. Lift the first foot by holding onto the ball of the foot with one hand. Apply treatment product to the underside of the heel with a brush using the other hand. After the heel is covered, place the foot back onto the cellophane. Cover the top of the foot with treatment product and then bring the cellophane up and around the foot to wrap it. Repeat this process on the second foot and slip the feet into thermal booties to process for up to 15 minutes.

Step 7: Process

Decontaminate your hands and then massage the client's arms and hands. Spritz the client's hands with alcohol, dip them in paraffin, and wrap them in cellophane. Massage the client's shoulders, neck, and face.

Step 8: Removal of the Treatment Product

Remove the client's feet from the thermal booties and use the cellophane wrap to pull as much product off the client's feet as possible. Remove the remaining product



FIGURE 10-10 A reflexology foot spa treatment. **(A)** Soaking, cleansing, and exfoliation in a foot basin—seated. **(B)** Foot massage and reflexology routine. **(C)** Application of treatment product. Cover the nail and the gap between the nail and the flesh with petroleum jelly and then apply the treatment product to the foot. **(D)** Wrap the foot in cellophane wrap (or a plastic bag) and insert the feet into heated booties or warm towels. **(E)** Process. Massage the face or treat the hands with an exfoliation, massage, and paraffin dip. **(F)** Removal of treatment product. Treatment product can be removed with hot towels or in a second foot bath as shown here. Finish with a peppermint lotion, foot powder, or foot gel.

with hot, moist towels or return the client's feet to a fresh foot soaking basin. Pay special attention to the nails and cuticle (which are covered in petroleum jelly). Wipe them clean with a tissue or rinse them with water until they are spotless. Apply flushing strokes to the legs, working from the ankles to the thighs to encourage fluid movement and prevent heaviness in the limb.

Session End

Use a lotion, gel, or powder as the finishing step of the foot treatment, depending on your treatment concept and goals. Remove the client's hands from the paraffin wrap and lightly massage the client's arms. Spritz an aromatherapy mist in a high arch over the client to signal the end of the service.

SPA FUSION

INTEGRATION OF SKILLS



STUDY TIP: Pay Attention to Your Internal Clock

Each person has a time of day when he or she is at his or her best. Some people jump out of bed refreshed, whereas others struggle until they have consumed two shots of espresso. Some people feel sleepy in the afternoon, and others can't sleep until well after midnight. You can optimize your school performance by paying attention to your internal clock. Whenever possible, plan study sessions during periods when you are usually the most alert and awake. If you know you are a "night owl," then don't plan 9 a.m. study sessions. Instead, study at night—even late at night. "Early birds" do best when they study in the morning.

GOOD TO KNOW: Reflexology Certification

The ARCB is an independent testing agency. They require students to take a hands-on reflexology course of no less than 110 hours and complete 90 postgraduate treatment sessions that have been properly documented using ARCB forms. To obtain the certification, students then have to take a 300-question test and a practical exam. Find out more at <http://www.arcb.net>.

CHAPTER WRAP-UP

Foot treatments are a popular offering on spa menus across the country. Although massage therapists cannot perform nail care as would be expected in a pedicure, they can mix and match treatment elements to design enjoyable foot care services. When you design a foot treatment, include a foot assessment step, soaking and cleansing step, exfoliation step, treatment mask, massage, and reflexology techniques. Other steps and techniques can be added based on your training and interests. Have fun with spa foot treatments by trying out a variety of treatment products and mixing and matching elements and enhancers. These are easy services to offer to family members and friends for enjoyable spa practice sessions.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Multiple Choice

- A _____ is a foot treatment in which the cuticle is pushed back and trimmed, the nail is trimmed, and the nail is filed.
 - Reflexology treatment
 - Foot massage
 - Pedicure
 - Manicure
- The border of the nail is partly covered by a fold of skin commonly called the _____.
 - Cuticle
 - Callus
 - Plantar surface
 - Dorsal surface
- A small area of thickened skin that is caused by continued friction or pressure is called a _____.
 - Cuticle
 - Callus
 - Plantar surface
 - Dorsal surface
- An individual who is certified or licensed to provide care of the nails, or to apply, repair or decorate gel nails or acrylic nails is called a _____.
 - Massage therapist
 - Esthetician
 - Hand and foot specialist
 - Nail technician
- The arch of the foot refers to _____.
 - Actually three strong arches (the medial longitudinal arch, the lateral longitudinal arch, and the transverse arch) that give the foot the strength to support the weight of the body.
 - Actually two strong arches (the longitudinal arch and the transverse arch) that give the foot the strength to support the weight of the body.
 - There is no true arch in the foot. Instead, the foot is flat.
 - The ankle is sometimes referred to as the arch of the foot.

Matching

Please place an X by those techniques that are out of the scope of practice of a massage therapist. Place an A by techniques that the massage therapist can perform in a foot treatment.

- _____ Polish is removed and the nail is trimmed and shaped with an emery board.
- _____ Reflexology techniques
- _____ The cuticle is pushed back and the excess is trimmed.
- _____ A treatment product such as seaweed, mud, or paraffin is applied to the feet.
- _____ The feet are soaked in a basin of warm water.