

# Introduction to Deep Tissue Massage Home Study Course

15 CE Credit Hours  
Online Study Guide

Presented by the:  
*Center for Massage Therapy Continuing Education*

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It is the responsibility of the practitioner to determine the appropriateness of the techniques presented in terms within the scope of practice. This information is in no way meant to diagnose or treat medical conditions. Written medical opinions are always the best way to resolve any questions regarding contra-indications to deep tissue massage.

## **Instructions for the Introduction to Deep Tissue Massage home study course**

Thank you for investing in the Introduction to Deep Tissue Massage home study course, a 15 CE credit hour course designed introduce you to deep tissue massage and its related theories. This is an introductory course in deep tissue massage and is not meant to teach advanced techniques. Please seek further training to add hands on skills.

This guide will contain all of the instructions you will need to complete this course. This is a 15 CE hour course, so that means it should take you approximately 15 hours to read the textbook, login and complete the exam.

The course and text should be a guide to developing and enhancing your skills as a massage therapist.

### **The following are steps to follow in completing this course:**

- 1. Read the instructions and review the textbook and exam. Your textbook will be mailed to you.**
- 2. Access the online examination in your account at [www.massagetherapyceu.com](http://www.massagetherapyceu.com).**
- 3. Complete your examination and print your certificate. The exam is open book and there is no time limit for completion.**

You must pass the exam with an 80% or better to pass this home study course. You are allowed to access and take the online exam up to 3 times if needed. There is no time limit when taking the exam. Feel free to review the textbook while taking the exam. This course uses the text *Deep Tissue Massage: A Visual Guide to Techniques*, by Art Riggs. There are no trick questions on the exam. All of the answers are clearly found in the text.

**It is advised to answer the exam questions in the study guide before testing online. That way, when you are testing you do not have go back and forth through the online exam and risk losing your answered questions!**

Good luck as you complete this course. If you have any questions please feel free to contact us at 866-784-5940, 712-490-8245 or [info@massagetherapyceu.com](mailto:info@massagetherapyceu.com). Most state boards require that you keep your “proof of completion” certificates for at least four years in case of audit. Thank you for taking our Introduction to Deep Tissue Massage home study course.

## Introduction to Deep Tissue Massage Exam

### Safety First: Caveats

1. Areas of caution when performing a deep tissue session include:
  - A. Thoracic outlet, axilla, bursae and ulnar groove
  - B. Liver, appendix, carpal tunnel and femoral triangle
  - C. Xyphoid process, descending aorta, carotid sinus and lymph nodes
  - D. All of the above

### Chapter 1

2. It is important to NEVER strain while working. Working deep is different than working hard.
  - A. True
  - B. False
3. For performing a deep tissue massage:
  - A. Use a lot of oil for less friction
  - B. Use little oil, to be able to work deep into the tissue
  - C. Do not ever use oil
  - D. Only use oil on the back
4. Work only as fast as:
  - A. Your endurance will allow
  - B. You should work fast to affect more tissues
  - C. The client's muscles will allow
  - D. All of the above
5. Stretching muscles while working will:
  - A. Adversely affect the massage and cause swelling
  - B. Lengthen the muscle for a more effective release
  - C. Allow you to work faster
  - D. Put your client at risk for a muscle pull
6. Thumbs should be used for all deep work.
  - A. True
  - B. False
7. Which of the following is imperative for using proper body mechanics?
  - A. The amount of oil used
  - B. The draping technique used
  - C. Proper table height
  - D. The lighting
8. Strokes used to elongate short muscles are called:
  - A. Lengthening strokes
  - B. Tappotment
  - C. Cross-fiber strokes
  - D. All of the above
9. Which of the following is a technique used for separating muscles?
  - A. Effleurage
  - B. Petrissage
  - C. Grabbing of a muscle and rolling it away
  - D. Cross-fiber friction

## Chapter 2

10. Deep tissue strokes are performed with:
  - A. Fingers and knuckles
  - B. Forearms and elbows
  - C. Fists
  - D. All of the above
  
11. Learning to use the knuckles, fist, forearm and elbow will allow you to do work with less effort and helps to protect your own body.
  - A. True
  - B. False
  
12. In what order does the general hierarchy of power and effectiveness go, beginning with the least amount of pressure used?
  - A. Thumbs, knuckles, fist, forearm and then elbow
  - B. Knuckles, fingers, forearm, fist and then elbow
  - C. Forearm, elbow, fist, knuckles and then thumbs
  - D. Fist, thumbs, knuckles, fist and then elbow
  
13. Thumbs are intended for deep tissue work and extended use.
  - A. True
  - B. False
  
14. Which of the following best describes the proper technique for using the fingers?
  - A. Bending wrists with fingers straight for the most pressure
  - B. Straight wrists and straight fingers
  - C. Wrists in a neutral position with fingers slightly bent
  - D. None of the above
  
15. Which of the following best describes the proper technique for using the knuckles?
  - A. Wrists in a neutral position
  - B. Internally rotating the entire arm
  - C. Using the non-dominant hand to support the client
  - D. All of the above
  
16. Proper fist technique involves:
  - A. Wrist slightly bent and applying pressure with the palm facing downward
  - B. Wrist neutral and applying oblique pressure with the palm down
  - C. Wrist in a neutral position and turning palm into a position similar to that of shaking hands
  - D. Wrist in an extended position, slightly inverted and applying pressure downward
  
17. When using the forearm, the wrist and hand should be relaxed and the pressure is applied close to the elbow rather than the wrist.
  - A. True
  - B. False
  
18. When using the elbow, force is applied:
  - A. With the elbow bent at 90 degrees and applying force below the olecranon process
  - B. With the elbow flexed to 45 degrees and applying force above the olecranon process
  - C. With the arm straight and applying force directly with the olecranon process
  - D. All of the above

19. Working on the muscles in a stretched position will allow you to more effectively release the tension in the muscle.
- A. True
  - B. False
20. Which of the following best describes how to perform the lumbar rotation stretch?
- A. With one hand you push and the other hand you pull
  - B. This stretch is contraindicated for clients experiencing back pain
  - C. Use one hand to rotate the pelvis in one direction while working in the other direction with the other hand
  - D. All of the above
21. Which of the following is a precaution to working in the side lying position?
- A. Be cautious around the iliotibial tract
  - B. Be cautious around the kidneys
  - C. Be cautious around the hip
  - D. All of the above

### Chapter 3

22. When treating feet with high arches, the best area to concentrate on is:
- A. Transverse arch
  - B. Lateral arch
  - C. Medial arch
  - D. All of the above
23. When treating feet with little or no arches, the best area to concentrate on is:
- A. Transverse arch
  - B. Lateral arch
  - C. Medial arch
  - D. All of the above
24. Using your elbow on the lateral arch of the foot instead of your thumbs is advised.
- A. True
  - B. False
25. When treating the anterior surface of the lower legs, which of the following is the best position for the foot and ankle?
- A. While you are working, move the ankle to stretch the tissue
  - B. While you are working, flex the foot to shorten the muscles of the leg
  - C. Keep the foot in a neutral position at all times
  - D. Grasp the ankle firmly to support it and keep it neutral
26. In order to reach the deeper soleus muscle, it may be necessary to first soften the gastrocnemius by:
- A. Flexing the knee or plantarflexing the ankle
  - B. Dorsiflexing the ankle to stretch the gastrocnemius muscle
  - C. Use your thumbs to penetrate deeper into the muscles
  - D. Both A and C

27. Which of the following best describes how to effectively treat the calf muscles in the prone position?
- A. Slowly sink into the posterior leg compartment
  - B. Snowplow the tissue (as shown in figure 3-18) to create length and softening
  - C. Position the ankle with the left hand or the therapist's knee to provide a stretch to the calf musculature
  - D. All of the above
28. Which of the following best describes why you would use side-lying calf work?
- A. It is effective for rolling the calf musculature away from the bone
  - B. In order to effectively treat the Achilles tendon
  - C. It is effective for softening the musculature
  - D. All of the above
29. Which of the following best describes the action of the adductor muscles?
- A. Abduct or "move away from" the body
  - B. Adduct or "move toward" the body
  - C. Flex and extend the leg
  - D. All of the above
30. Which of the following best describes strategies and positioning to effectively treat the adductors in the side lying position?
- A. Use your forearm to lengthen tissue while extending the knee with your other hand
  - B. Use your fingers to define the different muscles
  - C. Use a bolster to support the upper leg in order to minimize rotation in the back
  - D. All of the above
31. Which of the following is an advantage of working the hamstring muscles in a supine position?
- A. This position allows for stretching of the hamstrings which is not possible in the prone position
  - B. The entire length of the hamstrings can be worked in the prone position
  - C. None of the above
  - D. Both A and B
32. With client supine, having them cross the leg closest to you over and stroking the outside of the thigh with your forearm (as in figure 3-32) is a technique used to treat the:
- A. Adductors of the leg
  - B. Ischial tuberosity
  - C. IT band
  - D. All of the above
33. Why is the side-lying position the most versatile way to treat the thigh abductors?
- A. It allows the ability for many variations in the angle of the hip and knee flexion
  - B. It allows you to treat the hamstring muscle group more effectively
  - C. It allows the ability for stationary work on the quadriceps muscle group
  - D. All of the above
34. In clients with sciatic pain, which of the following is a possible point of the nerve impingement?
- A. Knee
  - B. Piriformis
  - C. IT Band
  - D. Tensor fasciae latae

35. Using broad surfaces such as the forearm makes it difficult to apply force with precision to the deeper muscles in the pelvis region.
- A. True
  - B. False
36. In order to effectively place the external rotators of the leg in a stretched position:
- A. Bend the client's knee to 90 degrees and rotate the lower leg
  - B. Pronate the foot
  - C. Plantar flex the foot
  - D. All of the above
37. Lateral spreading of the tissues of the low back and sacrum with the fingers or knuckles:
- A. Is a technique called spreading tissue over the sacrum
  - B. Will relax the superficial broad fascial tissue over the sacrum
  - C. Can have profound effects and calm the client very quickly
  - D. All of the above
38. Working on the coccyx is optional because it may make your client very uncomfortable.
- A. True
  - B. False
39. To stretch the quadratus lumborum for greater efficiency while your client is prone you should:
- A. Move the feet toward you
  - B. Move the feet to the opposite side of the table
  - C. Cross the client's legs
  - D. All of the above
40. Working with the breath on the abdomen and pelvic region, while effective, should be avoided if:
- A. You or your client is uncomfortable or you feel unqualified to perform the work
  - B. Your client is sensitive and having a menstrual period
  - C. There is the slightest possibility that your client may be pregnant
  - D. All of the above
41. Which of the following best describes how to distract the pelvis and spine as shown in figure 3-58?
- A. Using fingers to stretch and push the pelvis downward into the table
  - B. Using palms next to the spine and applying pressure in a downward direction
  - C. Using palms and/or forearms to stretch the client's low back in opposite ways
  - D. All of the above
42. Which of the following best describes where to palpate and treat the paraspinal muscles?
- A. Between the spinous processes and the transverse processes (the spinal groove)
  - B. Just lateral to the transverse processes of T1-T12
  - C. Between each of the ribs (the intercostal region)
  - D. All of the above
43. Which of the following is an action of the latissimus dorsi muscle?
- A. Extends the arm
  - B. Adducts and internally rotates the arm
  - C. Depresses the arm
  - D. All of the above



44. Spinal rotation is indicated for clients with acute back pain.
- A. True
  - B. False
45. Tightness in the upper chest can cause:
- A. Strain in the upper back
  - B. Tightness in the neck
  - C. Strain in the quadratus lumborum
  - D. Strain in the abdominal muscles
46. Which of the following is true regarding the pectoralis minor?
- A. This muscle can be very sensitive
  - B. It must be located through the pectoralis major is difficult to palpate
  - C. It is effectively treated by working its insertion, the coracoid process with the humerus internally rotated
  - D. All of the above
47. What is a precaution to working deep into the anterior chest muscles?
- A. Pregnancy
  - B. The carpal tunnel
  - C. The thoracic outlet
  - D. All of the above
48. While working with the client in a prone position, you can stretch the rotator cuff muscles by:
- A. Having your client raise their arm above their body level
  - B. Abducting your client's elbow into an internally rotated position
  - C. Hanging your client's lower arm off of the side of the table
  - D. All of the above
49. While your client is supine, you can access and treat the lateral scapula area by:
- A. Manipulating the client's arm to place the lateral muscles in a stretch
  - B. Palpating into the lower armpit area with your fingers as shown in figure 3-89
  - C. Using fingers or knuckles, apply pressure inward and downward on the subscapularis
  - D. All of the above
50. Flexing the client's wrist while treating the wrist extensors will:
- A. Place the wrist extensors in a stretched position
  - B. Place the wrist flexors in a stretched position
  - C. Place the triceps in a stretched position
  - D. Place the biceps in a stretched position
51. Which of the following can be used to treat the lower arms in order to prevent injury to the therapist's thumbs?
- A. Forearm
  - B. Fist
  - C. Knuckles
  - D. All of the above
52. It is not recommended to work deep into the hands with your thumbs.
- A. True
  - B. False

53. How do you perform side-lying trapezius stretching techniques?
- A. Place the client on their side and allow the muscle to naturally stretch
  - B. Passively push the shoulder down
  - C. Ask the client to reach for their feet for an added stretch while working the area
  - D. All of the above
54. It is not necessary to know the names of all of the small neck muscles, but it is crucial to be able to sink through superficial muscles to palpate individual muscles.
- A. True
  - B. False
55. Which of the following best describes how to palpate and mobilize the first rib?
- A. Have your client in the prone position
  - B. Use your elbow to apply pressure in the trapezius area
  - C. Place your thumb immediately in front of the trapezius and apply a steady pressure
  - D. All of the above
56. The scalene muscles are located:
- A. Along the back of the neck, superficial to the trapezius
  - B. On the front and sides of the neck
  - C. On the anterior surface of the scapula
  - D. All of the above
57. Which of the following are precautions to treating the scalenes?
- A. The femoral triangle
  - B. The thoracic outlet
  - C. The carotid artery
  - D. Both B and C
58. Which of the following best describes an effective way for freeing tight cervical vertebrae with the client in the prone position?
- A. Free up stuck areas by rotating one vertebrae in one direction while anchoring its neighbor so movement is localized
  - B. Press firmly downward in to the vertebrae and force them to move them
  - C. Use large broad strokes with your forearm
  - D. All of the above
59. Which of the following best describes the purpose of a massage therapist treating TMJ dysfunction?
- A. In order to provide relief from symptoms
  - B. In order to fix the condition
  - C. In order to determine the seriousness of the dysfunction
  - D. All of the above
60. How can the therapist define the boundaries of the masseter muscle?
- A. Ask the client to fully open their mouth
  - B. Ask the client to relax their jaw
  - C. Ask the client to bite down
  - D. All of the above

61. Which of the following is the action of the lateral pterygoid muscle?
  - A. Closes jaw
  - B. Aids in opening the jaw
  - C. Lateral deviation of the mandible to the opposite side
  - D. All of the above
  
62. The sternocleidomastiod muscle can be a source of trigger point headaches.
  - A. True
  - B. False
  
63. Which of the following is a recommended directional technique to working the sternocleidomastiod muscle?
  - A. Using horizontal strokes
  - B. Using longitudinal strokes
  - C. Using cross fiber friction
  - D. None of the above
  
64. Cranial decompression is performed by:
  - A. Placing your fingers at the base of the occiput and applying force upward into the occiput
  - B. Letting the client's head rest in your hands
  - C. Holding the position for several minutes until you feel the tissue softening
  - D. All of the above

#### **Chapter 4**

65. Which of the following healthcare practitioners is acceptable for massage therapists to refer clients to?
  - A. Chiropractors
  - B. Osteopaths
  - C. Dermatologists
  - D. All of the above
  
66. It is within a massage therapist's scope of practice to ask a client "What do you think causes the problem?"
  - A. True
  - B. False
  
67. Which of the following may be a possible cause or exacerbating factor of back pain?
  - A. Poor postural habits
  - B. Using a lumbar support while sitting at a desk all day
  - C. Using proper sleeping habits such as supine sleeping
  - D. All of the above

#### **Chapter 5**

68. If a client calls who has just sprained their ankle, what should you do?
  - A. Work the area using deep tissue massage right away
  - B. Advise the client to stretch and work it before coming in
  - C. Delay massage until they have seen a doctor or until the initial inflammation has subsided
  - D. All of the above
  
69. Which of the following best describes how to soften the Achilles tendon?
  - A. Press firmly on top of it until it relaxes
  - B. Work on the sides of it with your fingers or knuckles using a "crimping" technique
  - C. Stretch it to its maximum range of motion regardless of the client's pain
  - D. All of the above

70. To effectively treat the Achilles tendon in the standing position, which of the following actions can the client perform while you treat the area?
- A. Inversion of the ankle
  - B. Eversion of the ankle
  - C. Flexion and extension of the ankle
  - D. None of the above
71. It is within a massage therapist scope of practice to treat a client with plantar fasciitis?
- A. True
  - B. False
72. Working the IT band will almost always be beneficial to which of the following areas?
- A. Low back
  - B. Knees
  - C. Both the low back and knees
  - D. None of the above
73. Posterior work on the knee:
- A. Can address the tendons of the gastrocnemius and hamstrings
  - B. Should be done cautiously and softly
  - C. May help relieve posterior knee pain
  - D. All of the above
74. Which of the following muscles is primarily the culprit of tennis elbow?
- A. Adductor magnus
  - B. Adductor longus
  - C. Supinator
  - D. All of the above
75. Cross fiber strokes are beneficial in treating tennis elbow.
- A. True
  - B. False
76. Which of the following treatments is recommended on a client with carpal tunnel syndrome?
- A. Treating and performing cross fiber strokes directly over the carpal tunnel
  - B. Decompress and soften the tissue around the wrist
  - C. Open and widen the carpal tunnel and stretch the tissue on the palm
  - D. Both B and C
77. An area often immobilized and associated with low back pain is the:
- A. Scapula
  - B. Sacrum
  - C. Clavicle
  - D. Tibia
78. Which of the following is a sign that the sciatic nerve may be impinged?
- A. Pain
  - B. Numbness
  - C. Spasm
  - D. All of the above

79. Shoulder girdle problems can be treated by performing which of the following actions while working the area?
- A. Internally and externally rotating the arm
  - B. Distracting (tractioning) the shoulder joint
  - C. Moving the arm into positions of abduction to stretch the rotator cuff
  - D. All of the above

## Chapter 6

80. Once you are extricated from the restraints of having to give equal attention to all parts of the body in one session, you will have the freedom of deciding which areas of the body will benefit from thorough and focused work.
- A. True
  - B. False
81. Body reading and postural analysis involves:
- A. Looking at the client's stance and posture and determining any muscles that may be contributing to a certain way a person stands or sits
  - B. Helpful in determining a strategy for the massage session
  - C. Something that can help determine short, long or tight muscles prior to a session
  - D. All of the above
82. Which of the following areas is seated work is beneficial for?
- A. Gluteal musculature
  - B. Hamstrings group
  - C. Back and shoulder
  - D. All of the above
83. Which of the following is the most beneficial way to perform seated trapezius work?
- A. Working medial to lateral, giving a feeling of lengthening and lowering the shoulders
  - B. Working lateral to medial, giving a feeling of lengthening and lowering the shoulders
  - C. Working in a medial to lateral, giving a feeling of shortening and raising the shoulders
  - D. Working in a lateral to medial, giving a feeling of shortening and raising the shoulders
84. A stroke performed in a mechanical way without intention can be an empty gesture.
- A. True
  - B. False
85. The strokes you have learned in this course will allow you to diagnosis certain medical conditions.
- A. True
  - B. False
86. Integrating the techniques presented into your daily massage routine takes ongoing practice long beyond this course.
- A. True
  - B. False

This completes the Introduction to Deep Tissue Massage exam.