

**Impact  
Factor  
2.147**

**ISSN 2349-638x**

**Refereed And Indexed Journal**



**AAYUSHI  
INTERNATIONAL  
INTERDISCIPLINARY  
RESEARCH JOURNAL  
(AIIRJ)**

**Monthly Publish Journal**

**VOL-III**

**ISSUE-VIII**

**Aug.**

**2016**

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## **Importance Of Doing Daily Abhyanga (Oil Massage)**

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### **Abstract-**

*An Ayurvedic recommendation is the daily oil massage, called Abhyanga in Sanskrit. Literally, Abhyanga means, smearing the body with unctuous or oily substance. The purpose of daily oil massage is to balance the nervous system, prevent physiological imbalances and to lubricate and promote flexibility of the muscles, tissues, and joints. The classical texts of **Ayurveda** also indicate that daily massage promotes softness, youthfulness and luster of the skin. Accumulated stress and toxins in the mind and body dissolve during the daily massage in the form of improve lymphatic drainage and to improve blood circulation. A daily full-body warm oil massage therefore acts as a powerful recharger and rejuvenator of mind and body. While the tradition of Ayurveda is full of many types of massage and many benefits are mentioned.*

**Keywords-** Massage, Abhyanga

*Abhyanga — the ayurvedic oil massage — is an integral part of the daily routine recommended for overall health and well-being. The Sanskrit word sneha means both “oil” and “love,” and the effects of abhyanga are similar to being saturated with love. Both experiences can give a deep feeling of stability, warmth and comfort. Sneha – oil and love – is sukshma, or “subtle.” This allows it to pass through minute channels in the body and penetrate deep layers of tissue.*

*Ayurveda teaches that there are seven dhatus, or layers of tissue in the body. Each is successively more concentrated and life-giving. It is taught that for the effects of sneha to reach to the deepest layer, it should be massaged into the body for 800 matras, roughly five minutes. If we consider that the entire body needs this kind of attention, a 15-minute massage is the suggested minimum amount of time.*

### **The Benefits Traditionally Associated With Regular Performance Of Abhyanga.**

- Nourishes all parts of the body
- Increased circulation, especially to nerve endings
- Toning of the muscles and the whole physiology
- Calming for the nerves
- Lubrication of the joints
- Increased mental alertness
- Improved elimination of impurities from the body

- Softer, smoother skin, enhances the complexion
- Increased levels of stamina through the day
- Better, deeper sleep at night

Abhyanga provides the means for transdermal absorption of the healing qualities of the material used in the massage. It helps the skin to perform its diverse functions efficiently. Functions of skin are allowing toxins to be released from the body or nourishment to be absorbed by the tissues. It is like oiling the engine of your car — if you do it regularly, your engine will be in peak condition, and give you years and years of trouble-free performance.

The ayurvedic massage is traditionally performed in the morning, before your bath or shower, to facilitate the release of toxins that may have accumulated during the previous night. You can use cured sesame oil, herbalized massage oil.

If we choose sesame oil, Sesame oil contains antioxidant properties, and is helpful in protecting the skin from free radical damage. It is considered highly nourishing for the physiology.

### **How Is The Ayurvedic Abhyanga Done?**

1. **Head Massage:** Heat ¼ cup of sesame oil to slightly above body temperature. Start by massaging the head. Place a small amount of oil on the fingertips and palms and begin to massage the scalp vigorously. The massage for the head and for the entire body should be with the open part of the hand rather than with the fingertips. Since the head is said to be one of the most important areas to be focus on during Ayurvedic Daily Massage, spend proportionately more time on the head than you do on other parts of the body.
2. **Face and Ears:** Next, gently apply oil with the open part of the hand to your face and outer part of your ears. You do not need to massage these areas vigorously.
3. **Neck:** Massage both the front and back of the neck, and the upper part of the spine. Continue to use your open hand to rub the neck.
4. **Body Application:** You may want to now apply a small amount of oil to your entire body and then proceed with the massage to each area of the body. This will allow the oil to have maximum amount of time in contact with the body.
5. **Arms, Hands and Fingers:** Next massage your arms. The proper motion is back and forth over your long bones, and a circular motion over your joints. Massage both arms, including the hands and fingers.
6. **Chest and Abdomen:** Now apply oil to the chest and abdomen. A very gentle circular motion should be used over your heart. Over the abdomen, a gently circular motion should be used, following the bowel pattern from the right lower part of the abdomen, moving clockwise up, over, and down towards the left lower part of the abdomen.
7. **Back and Spine:** Massage the back and spine. There might be some areas which you may have difficulty reaching.
8. **Legs:** Massage the legs. Like the arms, use a back and forth motion over the long bones and a circular motion over the joints.
9. **Feet:** Lastly, massage the bottoms of the feet. The feet are considered especially important, and proportionately more time should be spent here than on the other parts of the body. Use the open part of your hand and massage vigorously back and forth over the soles of the feet.

This completes the abhyanga. Ideally, about 10-20 minutes should be spent each morning on the massage. However, if this time is not available on a particular day, it is better to do a very brief massage in the shower than to skip it altogether.

**Contraindication To Daily Massage-**

- 1. During the menstrual cycle-** Massage with deep pressure during the menstrual cycle is not advised in Ayurveda, as it can initiate a release of ama (toxins) from deep tissues at a time when the body is already a bit taxed. Some women don't like to stop abhyanga during their cycle because they have very dry skin. If you choose to do it during your cycle, it is best to apply the oil gently and for only about 5 minutes.
- 2. During pregnancy-** The reasoning is similar here. It is not a good idea to stimulate any sort of detox process during pregnancy. This precaution protects the growing embryo and fetus against any unnecessary exposure to ama.
- 3. Over swollen, painful areas or masses on the body**  
(Or do so only with the knowledge and consent of your health-care practitioner).
- 4. Over infected or broken skin**
- 5. When there is high ama or great physical discomfort-**  
A thick, white coating on the tongue often indicates high levels of ama.
- 6. During any sort of acute illness such as fever, chills, flu, or acute indigestion**
- 7. Directly after taking emetics or purgatives**

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