

Your Daily Massage Guide For

Breast Health

Kim Deering, Massage Therapist

1. Breast Massage Benefits

Reduce pain
Drain toxins
Increase lactation
Provide relaxation
Stimulate immunity
Enhance breast health
Unblock plugged glands
Increase tissue oxygenation
Decrease congestion and swelling
Increase circulation and lymphatic drainage
May help in dissolving fluid-like cysts
Relieve tightness in chest muscles
Help with pain from surgery
Strengthen and add resiliency to breast tissue
Decrease appearance of scars and stretch marks
Decrease symptoms of menstrual cramps

Your Daily Massage Guide For Breast Health

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2. My Story of Breast Pain

My Experience of breast pain and congestion as a forty-five year old perimenopausal woman lead to searching out the following information for myself and ultimately to share with anyone interested in self-care.

I had an inconsistent pain in the sternal portion of my left breast. No other ominous signs, just pain close to the center of my chest. A pulling pain that often felt sharp when I rolled over to the left or when I would lean over. I had experienced temporary congestion of this breast on other occasions and noticed monthly fluctuations of both breasts as I imagined every hormonally functioning woman did. Congestion would go away but now into my perimenopausal years and with my physical activities of being a massage therapist there was less relief from the pain and congestion.

June 2009, having completed my 2200-hour massage diploma, I knew about therapeutic work to relieve muscle aches and pains from injury. What I didn't know was the specifics for breast massage. Further research with the massage associations and on the internet to find a breast massage course lead me to finding a wonderful resource in the text book, *Breast Massage*, written by Debra Curties, R.M.T. Ms. Curties had offered her breast massage course in Alberta before I had started my schooling in massage. Checking with her I discovered she was not planning to teach in Alberta again any time soon. I was reassured that the textbook had very complete information. I studied the textbook and applied the techniques to myself.

The moment of my relief from breast pain came closer to the end of the massage routine when I did the decompressing lift to the left breast. I extended the lift, taking out the slack of the tissue, and took three relaxing breaths. I heard a pop and the release of pain as the obviously stuck fascial layers released from the sternum and possibly what I imagined would be also a release from the pectoral wall. I continue to practice the routine to continue and maintain the newfound freedom in unrestricted pain free movement and maintain the health of my breast tissue.

Getting older isn't easy. I don't bounce back from mishaps and injuries the way I use to. In fact the injuries of my youth are coming back to the surface for attention now. The breast pain could easily have been from a hit to the chest at any time in my life from playing sports, or just being physically active. I think I do have a faint memory of an accidental elbow to the chest happening once upon a time.

I still get fluid congestion in my breasts when I sleep on and compress my breast tissue and when my muscles are tight caused from an imbalance of too much physical work and not enough massage, stretch and relaxation. I get a massage weekly from a massage therapist for my muscles of the back and chest that are blocking the drainage of the breasts. I massage the congestion out of my breast, stretch, walk, and practice an energy balancing routine daily. There is more maintenance to stay healthy, pain free, and flexible with age. Daily self-massage is preventative, therapeutic and a nice way to relax your mind and body, knowing you are doing something good for your own health.

Some of what I have discovered that works for me may not work for every one. There are many good breast massage routines available on the Internet to view and follow along with. To maintain healthy breast tissue can be as simple as choosing to massage, do simple exercises like walking, and eat the right foods. This booklet of information is what I have done to ease my discomfort. Give it a try and find out for your self if some of the simple routines benefit you as it has me.

Kim Deering, MT
Drumheller Therapeutic Massage Clinic

I would like to thank all those dear people that helped and encouraged me to put this information into a form that can be easily accessible and understandable. This is done for you.

Note to all.

This booklet of information was researched and put together for the free education of and in support of massage techniques relating to the breast health concerns of my self, my family, friends, clients, and patients of my clinic.

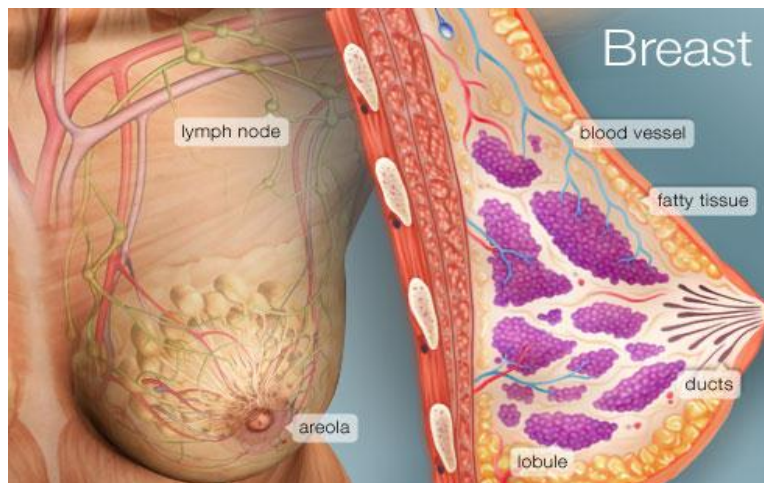
In putting this information in printed form I was able to put words to pictures already shared and pictures to words that were profoundly in need of clarity.

I encourage you to continue your quest for information and support for alternative ways to do your self-care.

All material referenced is given book and or Internet link credit.

3. Breast Anatomy

- Hemispherical shaped mammary glands.
- Composed of 15 – 20 lobules of glands and fat tissue.
- Lactiferous ducts carry milk to the surface openings at the nipple when lactating.
- Subcutaneous connective tissue and suspensory ligaments support the structure.
- Extends from breastbone (sternum) to armpit (axilla), with an axillary tail (tail of Spence) of breast tissue into armpit. **50% of disease occurs in upper outer quadrant and in the axillary tail of the breast.
- Extends from 2nd or 3rd rib down to 6th or 7th rib.
- Blood supply comes from arteries. Blood collects and returns to the heart by veins following similar paths of the internal thoracic, lateral thoracic, posterior intercostal, and superficial veins or the skin of the breast.
- Lymph fluids pick up and filter out cellular debris, bacteria and foreign material passing through lymph vessels to lymph nodes. Lymph pathways from breasts drain into various nodes returning lymph to veins above the heart. Concentrated lymphatic nodes utilized for breast drainage are; axillary nodes (armpit), parasternal nodes (breastbone) via internal thoracic vessels draining to larger vessels in the root of the neck, supraclavicular nodes (clavicle/collar bone), pectoral nodes (lateral border of pectoralis major), intercostal nodes (posterior to breast), internal mammary nodes.
- Breasts rest on muscles of pectoralis major, pectoralis minor and serratus anterior. Hypertonic, overworked tight muscles limit blood supply, pinch nerves and reduce movement of lymph.



<http://women.webmd.com/picture-of-the-breasts>

4. Physiology

The breast will undergo structural changes throughout the life of a woman.

- Puberty – hormones add shape with fat tissue
- Pregnancy – hormone changes prepare breast for lactation
- Perimenopausal / Menopause – involution of structure, age 35 – 60
- Monthly hormonal changes

5. Massage Contraindications

Do not massage post surgery less than 14 days. The scar needs time to create a barrier. Tenderness will likely stop you from having a massage at this time anyways. Massage and stretches help optimize fiber alignment, reduce pain and increase the scars functional ability to accommodate tissue movement. Post surgery pain may last 4 to 6 weeks. If pain is excessive or unusual, contact your physician. If tissue numbness or exaggerated sensation last more than a year then these sensations are permanent.

Lactational mastitis, edema, tenderness and congestion can be helped with applications of cold. Soak a twin-sized sheet in ice water or freeze a dry sheet. Wrap sheet in figure eight around outside base of both breasts. If there is any indication of infection see your doctor.

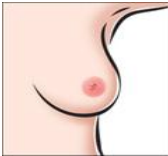
A lump that is not diagnosed, not painful, very hard, drags surrounding tissue when it is moved, has a defined border, moves poorly, does not change with monthly cycle, if breast is displaying any ominous signs, or implanted breast has distorted contour, see your doctor.

6. Ominous Signs

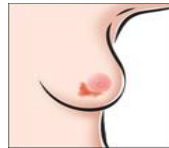
The following six signs of disease indicate a visit to the doctor.

<http://www.cbcf.org/central/AboutBreastHealth/Breast-Awareness/be-breast-aware/Pages/What-to-look-for.aspx>

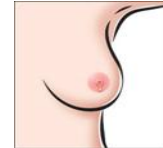
Nipple changes



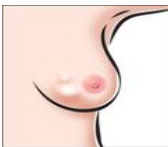
Redness



Nipple discharge



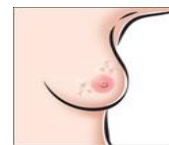
Lumps/thickening



Skin changes



Dimpling/puckering



7. Breast Pain From Trigger Points

A percentage of breast pain, congestion and chronic edema results from causes outside of the breast. Some trigger points may cause referral pain into the breast. There is no trigger point referrals from the muscle structures of the back, however having the back massaged will give balance to the trigger point work done to the chest.

Muscles to be massaged are the scalenes, posterior cervical, levator scapula, trapezius, pectoralis major, pectoralis minor, and serratus anterior. It would probably be easiest to have a massage by someone else to reach all the right muscles of the back and neck and chest; and to allow you to relax and release the tender trigger points in your massage. It may be possible to receive a breast massage from the massage therapist or they might be able to refer you to someone else that is able to do the work. Or you will be able to do the breast massage yourself at home later.

8. Trigger Points Referral Pain Patterns

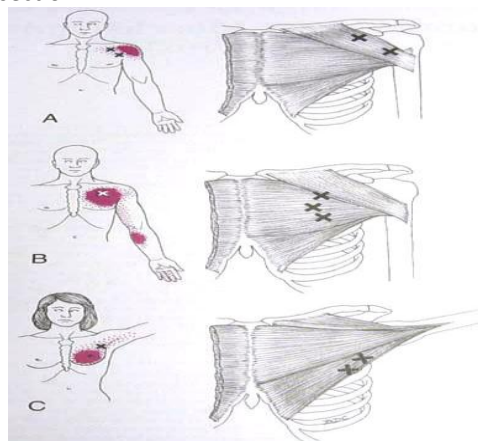
Referral pain from a trigger point is often interpreted as an internal breast problem. Trigger points are recurrent and need regular work to release the often-painful small points. The pain of the trigger point will feel like touching a bruise. As the point is released the pain will go away. Consistent working to release the trigger points several times a day for several days will bring relief in one or two days or in one week. Several muscles send pain to the same referral zone.

<http://www.triggerpoints.net>

The X indicates the trigger point location.

Pectoralis Major

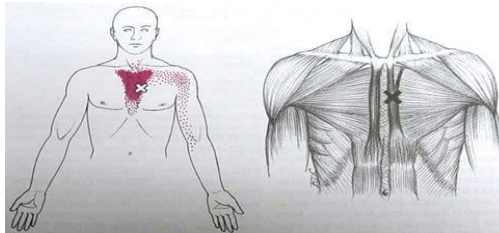
Sensitivity is in the nipple and pain in the breast. Trigger points found in the thick lateral border of the muscle and across the sternal section.



<http://www.triggerpoints.net/triggerpoints/pec-maj.htm>

Sternalis

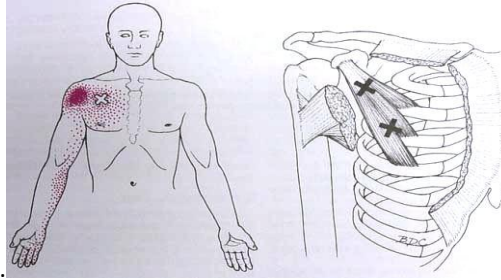
Lesser pain across the chest. Trigger points along the top of breastbone.



<http://www.triggerpoints.net/triggerpoints/sternalis.htm>

Pectoralis Minor

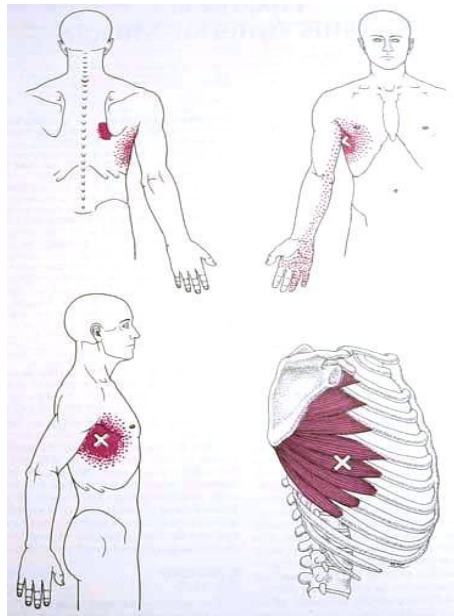
Pain to entire breast, often into arm and hand also



<http://www.triggerpoints.net/triggerpoints/pec-min.htm>

Serratus Anterior

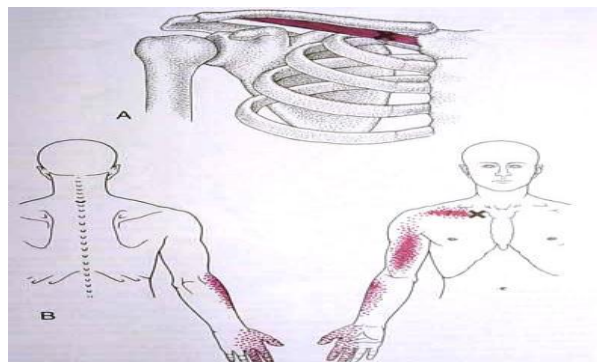
Breast feels abnormally sensitive. It is often this muscle alone that has women going to the doctor.



<http://www.triggerpoints.net/triggerpoints/serratus-ant.htm>

Subclavius

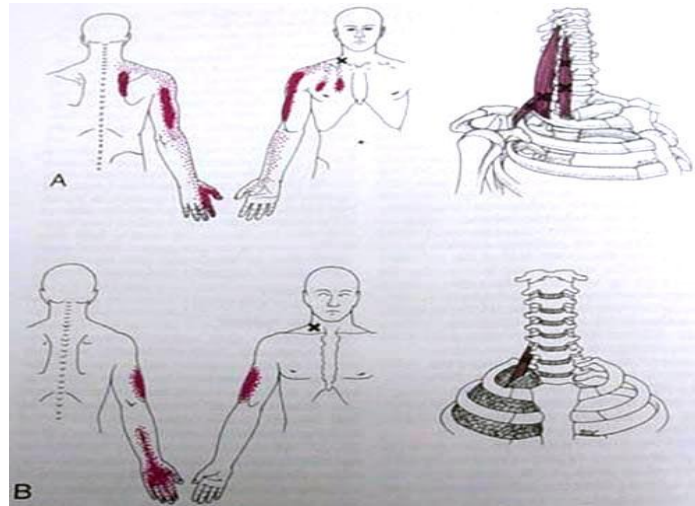
Pain is felt across the clavicle, across top of chest, down the arm and into the hand. Trigger point located below mid clavicle.



<http://www.triggerpoints.net/triggerpoints/subclavius.htm>

Scalenes

Abnormal sensations of numbness and pain occurring in various points of the chest, and often occurring in the arm and hand.



<http://www.triggerpoints.net/triggerpoints/scalene.htm>

9. Massage Oils and Essential Oils

What goes on your skin goes into your body. Use natural oil for massage. Apricot is good for the delicate skin of the breast, adding vitamins and minerals, absorbs well and is light. Sunflower, sesame, and grape seed are also good choices for the breast; or use body butter that contains no petroleum products.

10. Good Essential Oils

Adding essential oils to your base massage oil can bring relaxation, comfort, lessen pain and help maintain the health of the breast and whole body. The following essential oils have known properties of bacterial and fungal protection, anti-carcinogens, aide in elasticity to tissue, reduce scar tissue, circulation enhancing, blood cleansing, and speed the healing process of the tissue.

**Bergamot, Peppermint, Lemongrass, Lavender, Frankincense, Sage,
Geranium, Cypress, Marjoram, Ylang-ylang, Thyme, Rosemary**

Add one drop of each essential oil (12 drops of essential oil) to 2 tablespoons of base oil.

11. Bad Essential Oils

The essential oils that add estrogen to the tissue is not what the breasts need. Estrogen feeds tumors of the breast, uterus, and ovaries.

X Clary sage X Niaouli X Fennel X Aniseed

12. Foods For Healthy Breasts

Cruciferous vegetables: brussel sprouts, cabbage, celery, cauliflower, parsley, broccoli, kale, bokchoy, turnips

Carotenoids: dark leafy greens, oranges and yellow produce

Vitamin C: strawberries, blackberries, blueberries, cranberries, citrus fruit, red apples

Vitamin E: olive oil, nut butters, fresh ground flax seeds (2 tablespoons daily)

Selenium: garlic, onions, mushrooms

Green tea: inhibits cancer growths

Grape juice: concord grapes prevent painful breast, chronic cystitis mastitis, and breast cancer

Vitamin D: 10,000iu and 10 minutes of sunlight daily (have your blood vitamin levels checked to find what is optimum for you)

Omega 3 fatty acids: oily fish, tuna, cod halibut, flax seeds, and walnuts

13. Yoga

Helpful poses to consider are those that open the chest. <http://www.yogajournal.com> has a list of 38 poses to benefit the chest including: cobra, bridge, chair, fish, half-moon, upward facing dog and warrior.

14. Reflexology and Acupressure

Working the top of the foot, stroking from the toes upwards to the ankle helps the lymphatic drainage of the breast. On the sole of the foot, between each toe giving a gentle squeeze stimulates lymphatics. Of course seeing a professional reflexologist would be helpful in locating all the points to be worked for breast health.

Stroking the back of the hand towards the wrist also helps in lymph drainage to the chest.

The tender points in the muscles below the armpit and approximately in line with the nipple is a point that helps stimulate the drainage of fluids of the chest. Using a ball with good bounce, place the ball on the tender spots on your body and then press the ball against a wall. Continue to press your body against the ball against the wall and feel the tender spot let go after a few deep breaths.

15. Massage Routine

Massage can be done in an upright position. You may find it is easier to do the massage lying down. Or maybe do it reclining and relaxing in the bathtub. Exact technique is not the most important thing, the idea is to work all areas of the breast and to finish with strokes that encourage drainage out of and away from the breast into the internal parts of the body where the fluids that are held stagnant in the breast will be flushed out with the next few glasses of water you drink. Do drink water before you begin or receive any massage.

You will feel and notice results and have greater benefits for your breast health when you do all parts of the routine:

1. Open Lymphatic Channels
2. Relax Muscles
3. Massage the Breast
4. Shoulder Mobilization
5. Stretches

You will find it easier to massage when you use your right hand to reach across and work the left side and the left hand to reach across and work the right side. With practice you will find the moves that will work the whole breast and are comfortable to do. Getting relief from pain and congestion of stuck fluids is the end result of using massage to maintain healthy breasts.

A summary of the comments I have heard from my clients is that they had no idea that congestion hurt so much and thankful there is something they could do for themselves to maintain healthy breasts.

15.1 Open Lymphatic Channels

Stimulate three lymphatic channels for proper drainage of fluids needing to move out of the breast.

With an open flat hand or a closed fist gently pump or press on the sternum. This pumping stimulates the thymus gland below and the lymph nodes along the sternum.

Reach up from the sternum and place the hand across the clavicle (collarbone) and gently pump several times.

Rest the arm closest to the breast being worked on above your head. This will open up the armpit area. Place open hand across the top of the chest while inserting the fingers into the armpit.

Gently grasp and squeeze the muscle at the edge of the chest. This will also gently pump the tail of Spence, the upper outer tail of the breast tissue at the edge of the armpit.



15.2 Relax Muscles

Continue to relax the muscles: pectoralis major, pectoralis minor, serratus anterior, and intercostal.

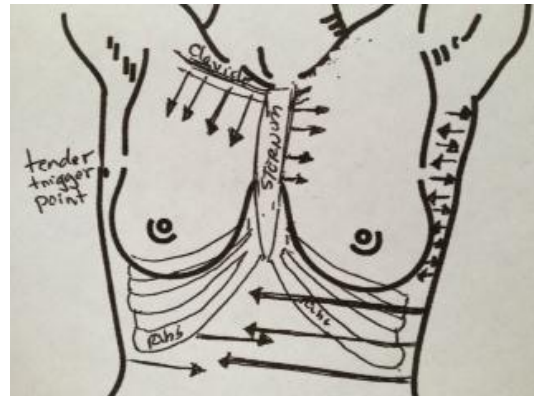
Reaching across your chest with an open hand and using your fingers make many short strokes down from the clavicle (collar bone) towards breast relaxing the pectorals.

With an open hand make many short strokes from center of chest along the sternum (breast bone) towards breast. You will notice the hard bumps of the ribs.

Reach across chest to work the muscles on the side of the body. With an open hand push and pull fingers along the ribs. Working deeper than a tickle. Working into and below the armpit. You will notice the hard ribs under the muscle. You might find very tender points in the serratus anterior muscles on the side. Using a counter

clockwise circular rotation find and push on the tender spot that feels like a bruise and hold that point and breathe and let it relax out. The tenderness will fade away.

Make many short strokes along the side of the body in the ribs below the breasts pulling up from the side moving across the ribs to the other side reaching from left to right and right to left. You will feel the ribs below the muscle.



15.3 Massage Breast

Support the left breast with the left hand while right hand does the massage then repeat the following routine with the right hand supporting the right breast and the left hand massaging the right breast.

Remember exact technique is not important. Work the whole breast and finish with strokes that encourage drainage out of and away from the breast towards the clavicle, the sternum, the ribs and the armpit area.

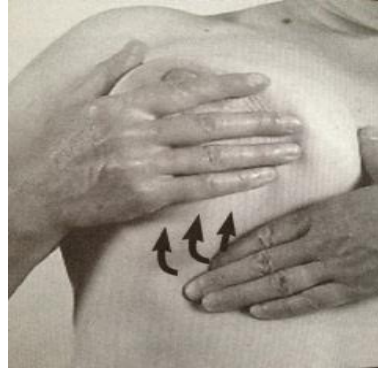
Place a small amount of apricot oil on the fingers. Use the whole hand to gently stroke all around from the base of the breast to the center. Direction of strokes is not important when first spreading the oil.

Work in a counter clockwise motion around the breast. The direction of the stroke helps pull out the stuck energy in the breast and encourages movement of fluids.

Work small two-inch circles all around the base of the breast. Continue making ever-larger circles working more of the breast, from the center of the breast to the base of the breast.



Some tenderness may be found and is normal when there is congestion built up in the tissues. Work within your tolerance level for pain and be gentle to yourself. Continuous counter clockwise circles around a found hard, tender, congested or questionable spot will start drainage of the area relieving the congestion and the tenderness or pain will fade.



Make specific gentle strokes from the center of the breast to the outside of the breast. And gentle strokes from the outside to the center

Use whole hand or just thumbs or just fingers



Work back and forth stroking from outside towards center of breast and from center of breast to outside.

Working all parts around the whole breast with gentle strokes.



There is no work necessary to the areole or the nipple.





Using whole hand continue stroking from center of breast towards the shoulder and from center of breast towards the sternum and clavicle.



Doing this broad stroke towards sternum and clavicle repeatedly for several moments you will feel the congestion of the breast changing

If you feel no change and you know there is congestion, there may be something blocking the pathways of drainage to the chest. Possibly tight muscles, scar tissue, or stuck fascial layers. More specific work to muscles and continued lymph drainage to the breast will open up the flow of fluids from the breast. Keep trying all the moves to the massage.

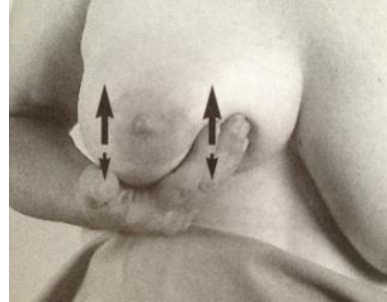
The following moves are specific to mobilize the breast tissues.

Use both hands to grasp breast and lift and pull it away from chest. Hold and take three breaths.

This was the final move that released my own fascial restrictions with a 'pop'. No more pain when leaning over.



Now release the breast to the chest and jiggle or mobilize the breast up and down and side to side. Using both hands to create the movement may be easier than using only one hand.



Do this lift and pull and compression and jiggle several times to create a pumping action on the retromammary space (the space between breast tissue and pectoral muscles and ribs of the chest.).

Movement helps move the fluids from the breast. Do this jiggle up and down whenever it is convenient, waiting at a stoplight, getting into the shower in the morning. Grab bra straps and bounce the breasts for a count of ten any time.



Finish massage with gentle strokes away from the breast towards the armpit, clavicle and sternum.

Now have another drink of water to help flush out the possible stagnant fluids now flowing and trying to exit the body.

Massage activates the body's elimination process causing potential dehydration.

So have another drink of water to add the necessary fluids into your body to help it function better. If you get a headache after any massage, it may be from not having had enough water before and after the massage. So have another glass of water. And yes it needs to be water.

15.4 Shoulder Mobilization

Perform shoulder shrugs up and down and rolling from front to back. This movement adds to the massage by the stimulation of blood flow and lymph flow and in support of the drainage of the breast.

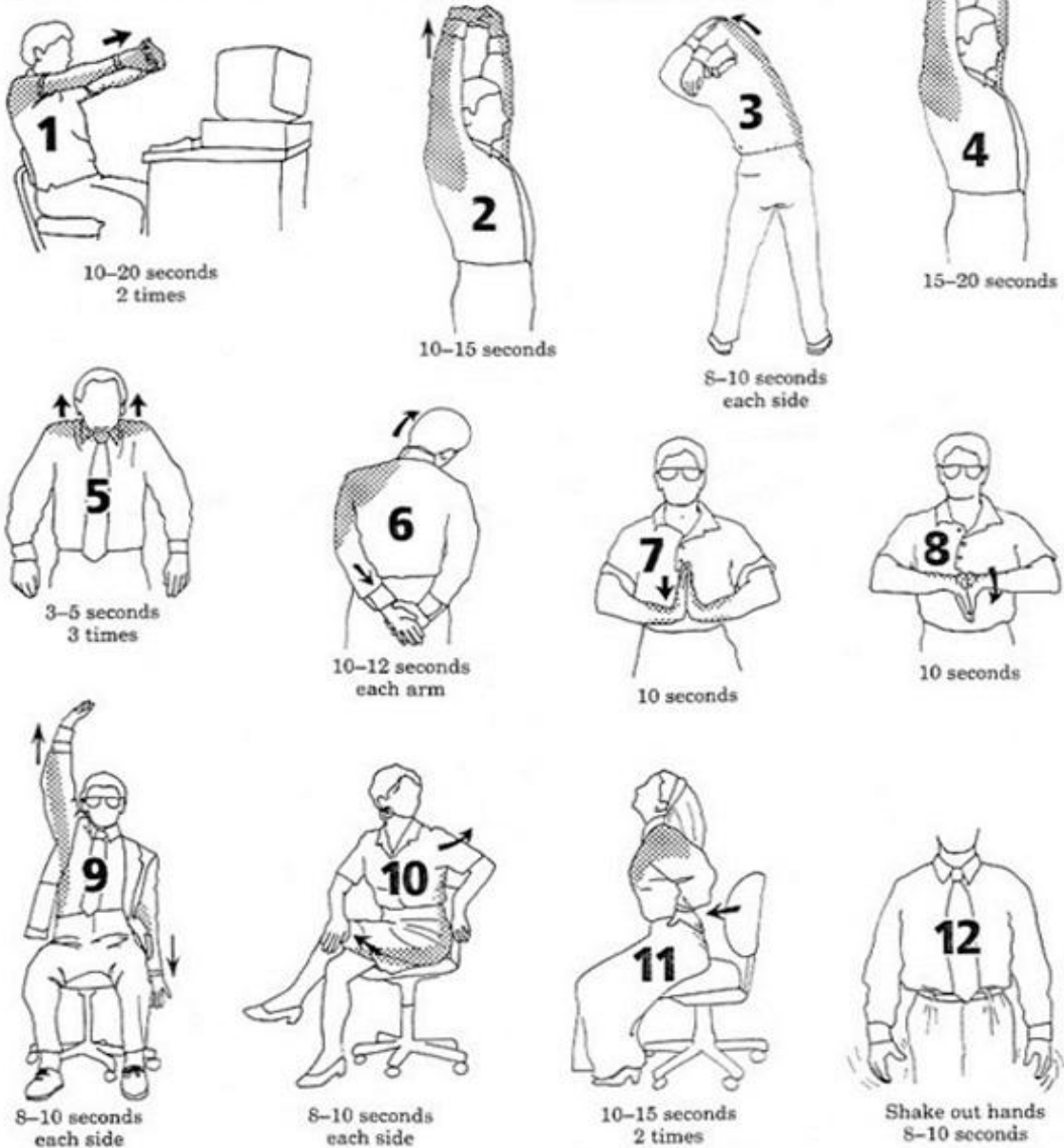
15.5 Stretches

Pectoral muscles of pectoralis major, pectoralis minor and serratus anterior need to be stretched out to open up the chest and relax the muscles allowing easy flow of healthy energy, blood and lymph within the breasts. The next page of helpful stretches is from *Stretching by Bob and Jean Anderson*.

Computer & Desk Stretches

Approximately 4 Minutes

Sitting at a computer for long periods often causes neck and shoulder stiffness and occasionally lower back pain. Do these stretches every hour or so throughout the day, or whenever you feel stiff. Photocopy this and keep it in a drawer. Also, be sure to get up and walk around the office whenever you think of it. You'll feel better!



Stretching ©2000 by Bob and Jean Anderson. Shelter Publications, Inc.

16. Caring Thoughts for Healthy Breasts

Always visualize a healthy pink vibrant breast structure. Good drainage with easy flowing ducts and healthy flow of lymph and blood.

Massage will release the constrictions limiting optimum health to the whole body.

Pain from blocked ducts or congestion or scar tissue can be reduced to open up new pathways to health.

Stretches do open up the chest and relax muscles. Practice yoga. Exercising, and walking will increase lymphatic flow and blood flow.

Excess weight on your body physically or externally (20 pound purses or backpacks) compresses structures of chest, shoulders and back setting yourself up for disease in the body.

Good posture opens up the chest letting health in.

Bra or no bra. Compression of under wires and ill-fitting straps and bands limit lymph and blood flow blocking the health potential of the breast. Compressions that cut or block meridian lines will also create physical weakness.

Respect yourself and your body.

Receive positive nourishment from yourself and others.

Thank your breasts, chest, and heart for being part of your body.

Thoughts, feelings and emotions have physical effects on the body; potentially blocking energetic pathways, closing chakras and meridian lines, constricting the blood, lymph and nerve vessels.

Forgive yourself for negative messages given to your body.

Release emotions and feeling of sorrow depression, trauma, anxiety, helplessness, rage, hostility, broken heart, loneliness, regret, anger, self-sacrifice, resentment, or pain.

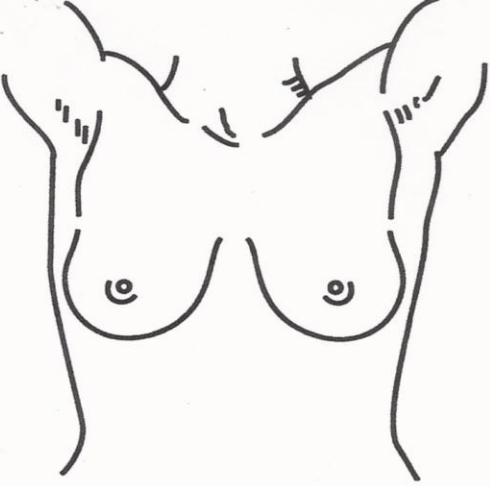
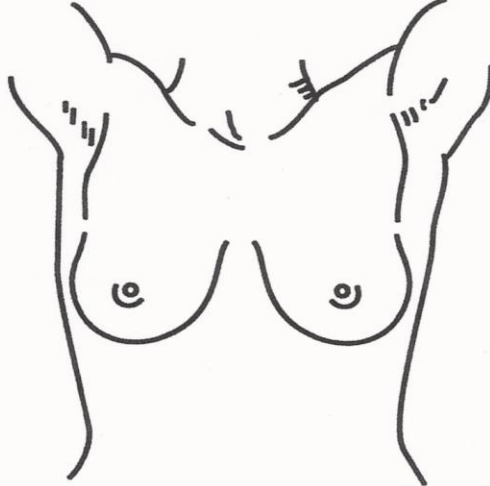
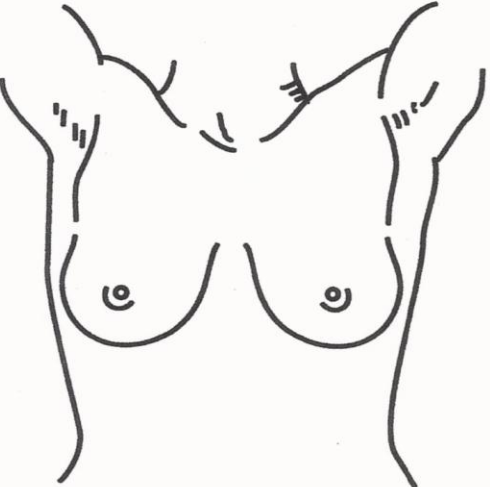
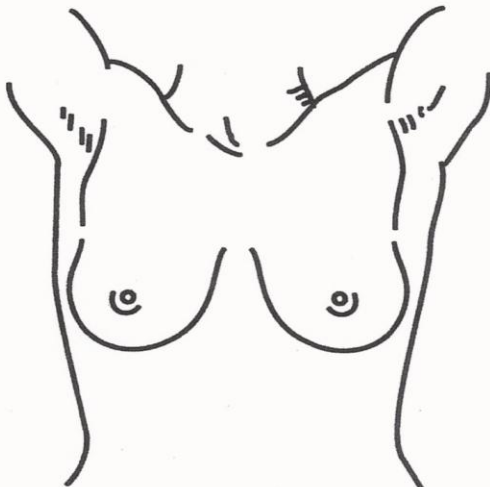
Get it "off your chest" by feeling emotions fully, grieve fully and let go so that you can "make a clean breast of it".

Emotional pain held in the tissue can be released. Express yourself to supportive friends, family or counselor. Talk therapy is helpful but not always enough. Massage will often release stuck emotion. CranioSacral Therapy, Somatic Emotional Release Therapy, Healing From The Core Therapy, and other techniques can be explored to release layers of held emotional trauma.

"Our culture uses mammograms as a fix in the mistaken belief that this test can create breast health. But true breast (and heart) health comes from living lives in which giving and receiving are equally balanced, and in which we eat well and move our bodies joyfully, vigorously, and regularly." Christiane Northrup, MD www.drnorthrup.com
<http://www.healyourlife.com/affirmations/dr-christiane-northrup/2012/11/26/womens-wisdom>

17. Breast Mapping

Knowing your breasts anatomy will give you a better understanding of what is being palpated when you massage. Use this diagram for charting your breasts.

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|  |  |
| Date: _____ | Date: _____ |
| Comments: _____ _____ | Comments: _____ _____ |
|  |  |
| Date: _____ | Date: _____ |
| Comments: _____ _____ | Comments: _____ _____ |

18. References and Resources

Debra Curties RMT
Breast Massage
<http://www.curties-overzet.com/books/breast-massage.html>

Christiane Northrup MD
Women's Bodies, Women's Wisdom
www.drnorthrup.com

Susan M. Love MD
Dr Susan Love's Breast Book
www.dslrf.org/home.asp

Donna Eden
Energy Medicine for Women
www.innersource.net

Dr. Sherri J. Tenpenny, D.O.
Beat Breast Cancer Through Breast Health
www.drtenpenny.com

Michael Reed Gach
Acupressure's Potent Points
www.acupressure.com

Clair Davies, NCTMB
The Trigger Point Therapy Workbook
www.triggerpointbook.com

Janet Wright
Reflexology and Acupressure

Valerie Ann Worwood
The Complete Book of Essential Oils and Aromatherapy

Jane Buckle
Clinical Aromatherapy
www.rjbuckle.com

Bob and Jean Anderson
Stretching
www.stretching.com

Suzanne Sculock-Durana
Full Body Presence
www.healingfromthecore.com

Yoga Journal
www.yogajournal.com

One of many great places to shop online for apricot oil and essential oils with free shipping in Canada www.well.ca



KIM DEERING has been a practicing Massage Therapist since 2008. She graduated in 2009 from a 2200-hour program at MH Vicars School of Massage Therapy in Calgary - a school known for its high standards and superior massage education. She is an examiner and an active member of the Massage Therapist Association of Alberta.

Kim is interested in lifelong learning. In 2010 she began volunteer teaching obstetric acupressure and labour massage at the prenatal class held at the Drumheller Health Centre. She teaches at the clinic by appointment: Infant Massage, Breast Massage and effective Fertility Massage. Booklets and sample massage oil are given with instruction at the clinic.

Kim works with clients from newborn to geriatric; incorporating all her education to facilitate you on your healing journey. "Finding what works for you can change your health and your life."

Treatments: Therapeutic, Pregnancy, Postnatal, CranioSacral Therapy, Trigger Point, Myofascial Release, Deep Tissue Massage, Sports Massage, Relaxation, Infant, Pediatric, Obstetric Acupressure, Lymphatic Drainage, MVA/Rehab, Geriatric, Reiki, Fertility Massage.

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