

REFLEXOLOGY

Reflexology is the application of finger and thumb pressure to the feet and hands to stimulate the natural healing process of the body

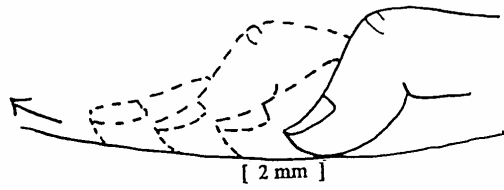
The body is mirrored on the foot and points on the feet and hands correspond to specific organs and functions of the body. By stimulating these points a symptom or condition can be eased.

THE HISTORY OF REFLEXOLOGY

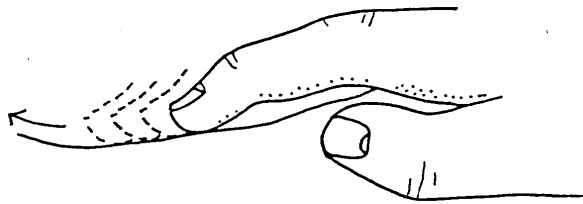
- The system of working on the feet is an ancient therapy
- Earliest traces were found 2 1/2 thousand years ago
- Pictogram found in Egypt in the tomb of a physician shows a form of foot massage
- The practice spread to Europe in the Dark Ages and forms of pressure point therapy were well known in the Middle Ages
- Present day Reflexology was pioneered by an American Specialist called Dr William Fitzgerald who discovered the anaesthetising effect of working points on the hands and feet
- In the 1930's work on the feet became distinguished from zone therapy to become Reflexology as we know it today

THE PART REFLEXOLOGY CAN PLAY WITHIN A MEDICAL PRACTICE

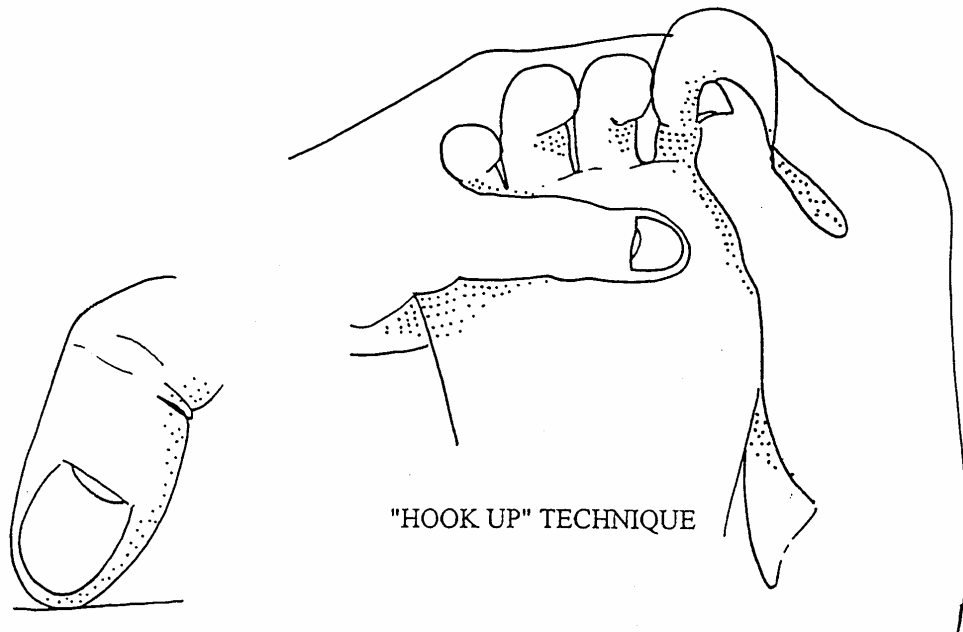
- Rule no. 1 Reflexology does not diagnose
- Acts to complement all forms of standard medical treatment covering a wide range of acute and chronic conditions
- Useful for:
 - Long term chronic cases
 - Stress and tension
 - Where there is a need to reduce reliance on drugs
 - Patient's who "don't like taking pills"
 - Patient's who need more support than can be given within the constraints of normal consultation times
 - Where a patient produces symptoms for which there appears to be no underlying pathology



THUMB WALK OR "CATERPILLAR WALK"
 BEND AND STRAIGHTEN THE FIRST JOINT OF
 THE THUMB, GRADUALLY CREEPING FORWARD



THE SAME MOVEMENT IS USED FOR FINGER WALKING



"HOOK UP" TECHNIQUE

THE MEDIAL SIDE OF THE THUMB
 RATHER THAN THE WHOLE PAD
 IS OFTEN USED TO MAKE CONTACT
 WITH THE REFLEX POINTS

TECHNIQUES

WHAT HAPPENS DURING A TREATMENT

- A full consultation is taken which includes medical history, lifestyle and any current health problems
- Feet are cleansed and a short routine to help patient and feet to relax
- Thumb walk or “caterpillar walk” movement
- Same movement using finger
- The medial side of the thumb rather than the whole pad is used to make contact with a specific reflex point on the foot
- “Imbalances” are detected in the body and manifest on the foot in the form of “grittiness” or “crunchiness”. Sensitivity or tenderness can also be felt by the patient
- Treatment usually takes about 45-50 minutes
- Given aftercare advice to drink plenty of water or fruit juice to aid elimination of toxins for next 24 hours, try to avoid alcohol, light diet and rest if possible
- Possible after effects might be headache, flu-like symptoms
Increase in bowel movements and frequency of urination
- If both therapist and patient believe in the therapy there is a greater chance for healing to occur

EVIDENCE TO VALIDATE REFLEXOLOGY

- As with other complementary therapies there is limited research aimed at validating Reflexology
- Some recent reports and research include:

A Doctor's study of 64 pregnant women within a GP's Practice showed a range of effects, including a significantly reduced labour time (published in Obstetrics and Gynaecology)

A study of women suffering from severe PMT showed a significant reduction in symptoms amongst those treated with Reflexology

A study of patient's within the Trauma Unit at the Prince of Wales Orthopaedic Hospital Cardiff showed that those who received Reflexology went home on average 3-5 days earlier than others.

Research also with MS sufferers

Balancing of Hormones naturally (Foundation of Integrated Medicine Funding)

Palliative Care

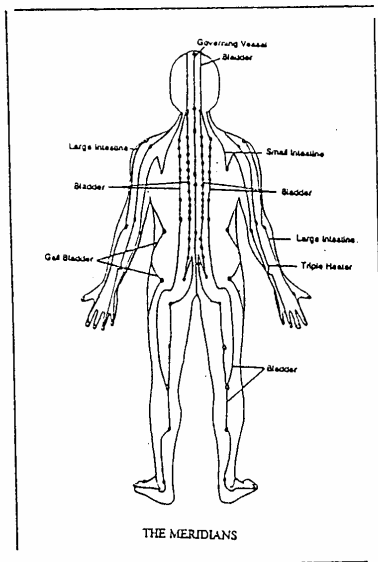
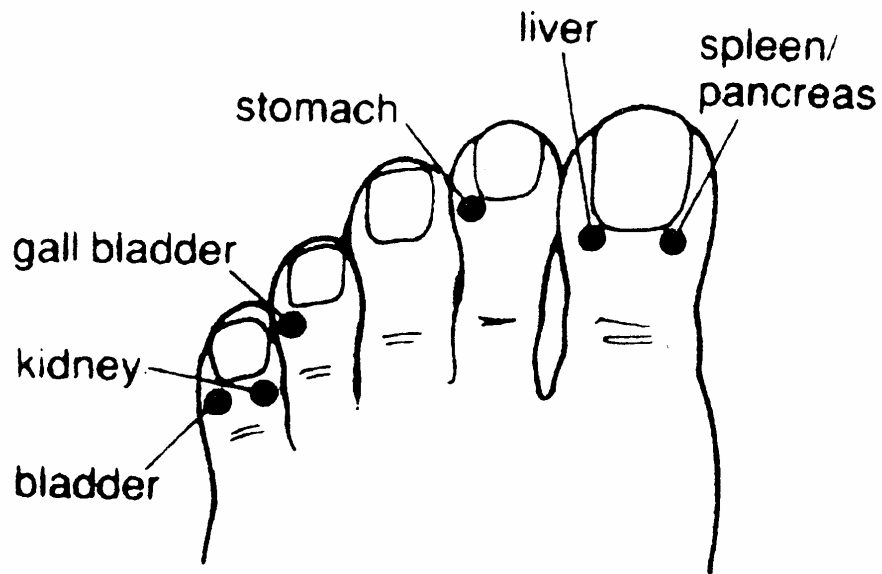
Parkinson's Disease

THE PATIENTS WHO COULD BENEFIT

Reflexology has been found to be particularly helpful in such areas as:

- Poor cardiovascular or lymphatic circulation
- Stress related conditions
- Muscular skeletal pain (backache, stiff neck, frozen shoulder)
- Sinus problems
- Menstrual problems
- During pregnancy
- Bowel conditions particularly helpful with constipation and IBS
- Palliative care
- Post operative recovery
- Asthma and respiratory problems
- Migraines and headaches
- Insomnia

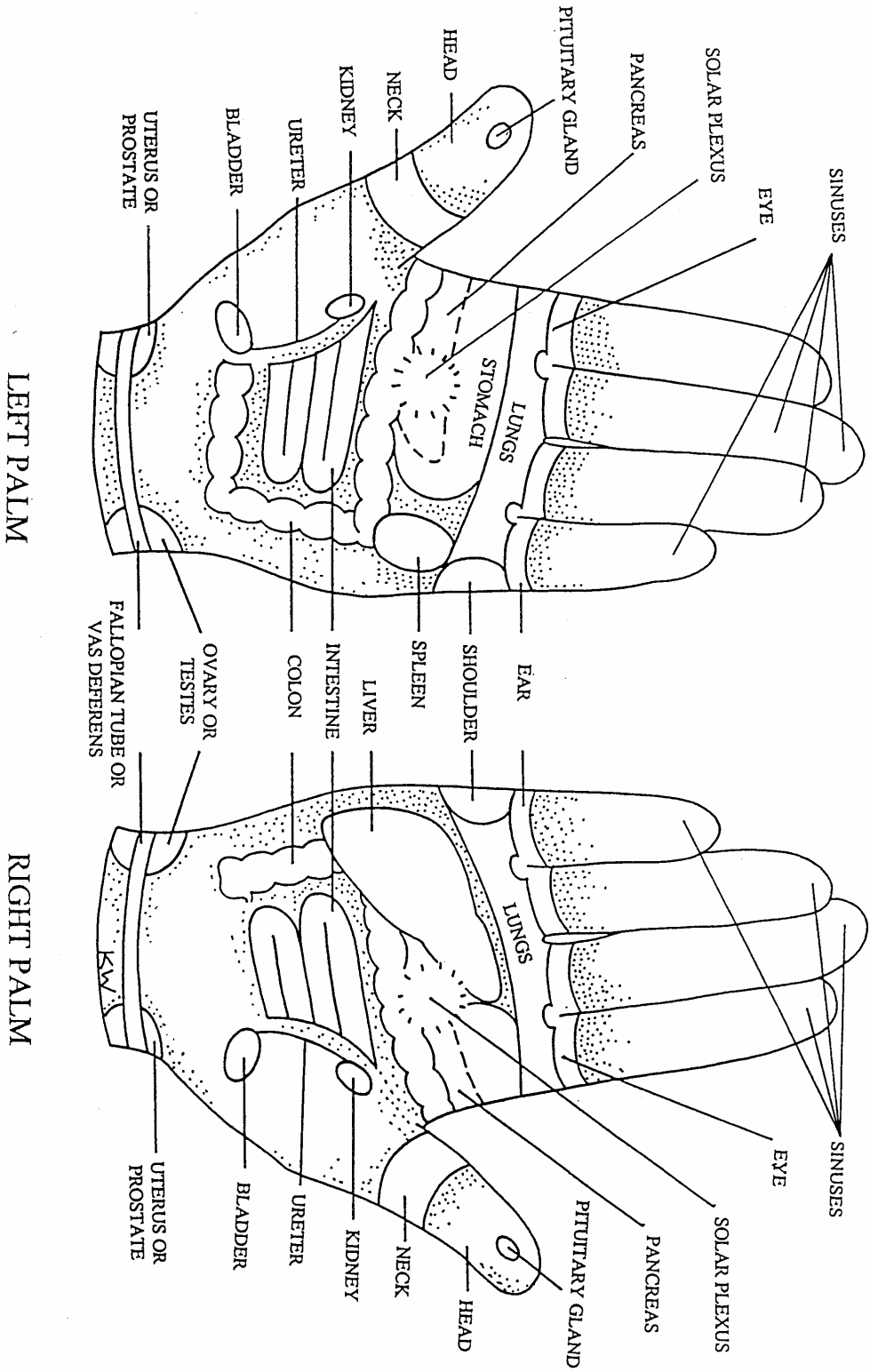
There are very few contraindications although certain conditions require special care and may require liaison with the GP



Although we don't know how reflexology works, a number of theories have been put forward. The meridian system has been used in the East for thousands of years - pathways through which the energy of the universe circulates throughout the body organs. Blocked pathways cause problems.

THE THEORIES ON HOW REFLEXOLOGY WORKS

- Deep muscle relaxation to relieve tension and stress
- Improvement of cardiovascular and lymphatic circulation
- Stimulation and inhibition of transmission of nerve impulses to the brain
- Reduction of pain through gate control and stimulation of the production of endorphins
- Stimulation of key points on acupuncture meridians
- Effects on the body's electromagnetic field
- Benefit of an hour of rest and stillness
- Psychological benefit of personal attention and care



LEFT PALM

RIGHT PALM

