

Swedish Massage

Mark Beck

Swedish Massage is currently the most common model for basic *BodyWork* in the United States. It denotes a relaxing, usually nonspecific, full body session using the traditional *techniques* of effleurage, petrissage, friction, tapotement and joint movements. Western therapeutic *BodyWork* has expanded and integrated the *techniques* of basic Swedish Massage to include *assessment* and planning procedures as well as a wider variety of *BodyWork techniques* such as compression, vibration and holding. Swedish Massage is directed mostly toward the physical body.

Receiving a Swedish Massage is a relaxing experience as the practitioner applies long, gliding strokes, squeezes and presses muscles and moves nearly every part of the client's body. Many of the *techniques* have either *direct*, mechanical effects on the soft tissue to which they are applied, or more *systemic*, reflexive effects that influence the autonomic nervous system. *Direct effects* include changes in *local* circulation, compression or stretching of muscle tissue and *fascia*. Effects to the autonomic nervous system may include stimulation of the sympathetic or parasympathetic nervous system, depending on the choice and duration of *BodyWork techniques*.

Basic Swedish Massage is often the first system of *BodyWork* a student is introduced to in school and is the most common treatment consumers expect when they make an appointment for *BodyWork* at a spa or clinic.

Swedish Massage

TouchAbilities®

Technique	Component	Skill
Touch	Kinetic	Holding
Effleurage/Gliding	Gliding	Sliding/Planing
Petrissage/Kneading	Compression Expansion	Pressing/Squeezing Lifting, Rolling, Pulling
Friction	Compression Gliding	Pressing, Twisting/Wringing Rubbing
Compression	Compression	Pressing
Vibration	Oscillation	Vibrating, Shaking
Tapotement/Percussion	Oscillation	Striking
Joint Movements	Kinetics	Mobilizing, Stabilizing
Assessment	Cognitive	Inquiring
Planning	Cognitive	Intending, Focusing