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Do

GOOP

nourish the inner aspect

by Gwyneth Paltrow



D.I.Y. Reflexology

Reflexology is defined in Webster's Dictionary as "a system of massage used to relieve tension and treat illness, based on the theory that there are reflex points on the feet, hands and head linked to every part of the body." We were curious if we could get access to some at-home reflexology know-how for treating loved ones or even ourselves. Chantel C. Lucier, from NYC's beloved [Angel Feet](#) shares some of her vast knowledge on the subject below.

Chantel's Tips for curative foot care

There are a few reflexology points I find particularly effective for myself. While my partner is not a reflexologist, if I am experiencing a headache, intense menstrual cramps, or having a tummy ache there is nothing more relaxing then getting my feet rubbed.

Stress is linked to so many ailments, what better than a reflexology session (especially at home) to calm the nervous system and send the message to the body to relax? Reflexology has been found to be helpful in the reduction of tension and stress, promoting balance, improving circulation and can assist in one's own healing process. In my practice, I often teach my clients the reflexology points where they're experiencing tension so they can continue to nurture themselves at home.

Important note: Certified reflexologists don't massage or rub the feet; we have specific thumb and finger walking techniques that are the most effective when reflexing a point, but this is not to say that a little home care by a loved one is ineffectual. In fact, I really believe that reflexology is very effectual as a complimentary modality and excellent for self-care.

Headaches

- The big toes are where the head, brain, pituitary/pineal glands, and upper cervical spine (neck) reflexes are located. The tips of all the little toes too coincide with the head, brain, and sinus reflexes (give more attention to these toes if you have a sinus headache).
- The spinal reflex resides along the inside or medial aspect of each foot; this is also very effective since the spine is where the nervous system is housed.
- Dehydration, hunger, and/or a digestive issue can all be common causes of headaches, too. In this case, the digestive system reflexes are located on the bottom or plantar aspect of the foot and can be reflexed accordingly.
- Since it is sometimes difficult to isolate where a headache might be emanating from, there is no harm in giving attention to all these areas. If you want to be really precise, refer to a reflexology map (see below).

Menstrual Cramps

I have always had very painful menstrual cramps. It was through receiving reflexology regularly that I discovered my menstrual discomfort was given relief and the associated back and joint pain decreased substantially. The areas that are most effective are the reflexes to the reproductive and endocrine systems.

- Give attention to the sides of the heel (medial and lateral aspect of each foot); this is where the ovary and uterus reflexes can be found.
- The endocrine system consists of the pituitary gland, the thyroid and parathyroid glands, adrenal gland, pancreas, and ovaries. Refer to a reflexology map to better pinpoint where to reflex.

Tummy Ache

The area that corresponds to the digestive system reflexes is located on the bottom plantar aspect of each foot. Many of the reflexes to the integral organs that contribute and play key roles in the digestive process are all located here.

- This is a delicious area to give attention to in general as the arch of the foot can really use the care after a day in shoes pounding concrete as well. I refer to this area as the belly of the foot as it's the softer portion of the plantar aspect (between the ball and heel) of each foot.
- Again, refer to a map (below) for more precise reflexology points and where each organ reflex is located.

Reflexology Maps

If you are without a friend or partner, reflexes to every part of the body can be found in your hands too. I often give myself mini-reflexology sessions on the train to and from work.

Here's a [link](#) to a great map for the hands.

<http://goop.com/diy-reflexology/>