

About Chi Nei Tsang Abdominal Massage
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"The abdominal area, with the internal organs and their internal structures, holds the secrets of a person: things we hide from ourselves. The body holds all kinds of strategies for addressing conflict, personal history, personality, tendencies. Thus the abdominal structure holds the secret of the future, of a person's life purpose. Any deviation from that purpose brings us in direct conflict with ourselves and causes illness".

Gilles Marin, Founder & Director of the Chi Nei Tsang Institute, Berkeley, California, USA

Why massage the stomach?

"Chi Nei Tsang's power lies in working from the centre toward the outside by focusing on the abdomen and the navel area."

The abdomen is an area of the body which can easily become a storehouse for physical toxins as well as unresolved emotional charges. Whilst most ancient cultures saw the abdomen as one of the most important areas for massage, (the Mayans, Hopis and Samoans to name a few), and devoted complete treatments to just this area, today it is a part of the body often glossed over or avoided completely.

The energy (chi) of the organs, glands, brain and nervous system converge at the navel, and by massaging this area it is possible to unwind tension manifesting in other areas of the body. Since the navel - the 'original scar' - is the place from where we took nutrition and excreted from in the womb, the body has a memory to use the abdomen as a storage site for toxins.

What is Chi Nei Tsang abdominal massage?

"We learn to digest (physically and emotionally) the same way we learned to eat and prepare our meals"

Chi Nei Tsang is a holistic massage technique of ancient Taoist origin. It was originally used by monks in Chinese mountain monasteries to detoxify, strengthen and refine their bodies to perform their high level spiritual practices. It was brought out of secrecy to the West in the 1970's by Master Mantak Chia as the physical branch of his Universal Tao healing system - a complete self-cultivation system of meditation, chi kung, tai chi and internal energy cultivation (see www.universal-tao.com).

Chi = Energy / Information Nei = Internal Tsang = Viscera / Internal organs

Chi Nei Tsang literally means "working the energy of the internal organs" or "internal organs chi transformation." CNT is the skilled art of massaging the abdomen to cleanse the internal organs of physical toxins and long-stored emotions. Whilst working at a 'physical level', it automatically works with the mental-emotional layers of the body, going to the very origin of health problems including psychosomatic responses. It therefore enables one to purify & strengthen the body-mind-emotions, ultimately resulting in greater mental & spiritual clarity.

About sessions

"The objective of Chi Nei Tsang is to help people grow and change by listening to their bodies, not by fixing them."

CNT practitioners work on the abdomen with deep, soft and gentle touch, to train the internal organs to work more efficiently. However, this is not a lay-back, zone-out massage for the client. Sessions are focused, with the client being guided in a specific breathing pattern, their breath and attention being directed to wherever the practitioner's hands move throughout the treatment.

On an emotional level this brings the client into contact with themselves, with whatever hidden emotional charges are lying hidden in their body causing physical tension and discomfort. The Chi Nei Tsang practitioner is not there to 'fix' the client - they are there to bring the client in contact with themselves, allowing them to make contact with aspects of themselves they have hidden or forgotten. The key is to bring back awareness within oneself, which in turn brings a release and shift of healing energy - ultimately all healing comes from within.

Benefits of Chi Nei Tsang

"Clients may first come for Chi Nei Tsang treatments to take care of particular symptoms; however, Chi Nei Tsang practitioners should make their contract with clients very clear: while the practitioner is there for support through different techniques as well as for supplying information on bettering themselves, the only person who can really take care of the symptoms is the client. Healing only comes from within"

All of the body systems are systematically addressed: digestive, respiratory, cardio-vascular, lymphatic, nervous, endocrine, urinary, reproductive, muscular-skeletal, and the acupuncture meridian system (Chi). The mental-emotional bodies are also addressed as the client safely reconnects to hidden emotional charges via the breath, allowing their trapped energy to be released for good.

Chi Nei Tsang helps to:

- Naturally detoxify the abdominal organs by flushing toxins from the organs
- Stimulates the lymphatic and circulatory systems
- Improves digestion & assimilation
- Aids elimination & constipation
- Improves breathing
- Relieves chronic shoulder & back pain caused by visceral imbalances
- Reaches the cause of irritable bowel syndrome
- Eases menstrual cramps
- Can help with gallstones, kidney stones and parasites
- Can heal endometriosis and fibroids
- Can reverse hypoglycemia & diabetes (along with diet changes)
- Releases blocked energy manifesting as fatigue and chronic fatigue
- Increases vitality, energy and overall feelings of well-being
- Helps release deeply-seated emotional charges at the root of major physical and mental symptoms

In summary, today CNT is mainly used for four different reasons:

1 - CNT detoxifies: CNT manipulations help relieve the body of excess stagnation, improving elimination and stimulating the lymphatic and the circulatory systems. CNT also strengthens the immune system and resistance to diseases. In doing so, CNT augments other health care modalities with optimal results. (Clients using CNT before and after surgery recover better and faster.)

2 - CNT helps restructure and strengthen the body: Because it addresses the visceral structures and positioning of internal organs, CNT stimulates them to work better and also helps correct postural problems resulting from visceral imbalances. It releases deep-seated tensions and restores vitality. CNT has been helpful with chronic pains such as back, neck and shoulder pains and problems related to misalignment of the feet, legs and pelvis.

3 - CNT helps practitioners become more aware of the quality of their emotional life: All of our unprocessed emotional life is stored in our digestive system waiting to be addressed. Poor emotional digestion is one of the main reasons for ill health. CNT facilitates the unfolding of emotions and the clarification of our emotional life. This makes it possible for us to evolve and grow in the direction of our better self. CNT has also been successfully used in combination with psychotherapy.

4 - CNT teaches clients to know themselves better: Ultimately we are all responsible for our own health and true healing only comes from within. Clients are taught techniques to improve breathing as well as fundamental self-help massage techniques.

"Chi Nei Tsang works on the internal structures of the body to upgrade the quality and quantity of the chi flowing there. It is an internal form of feng-shui that creates a field of information in which healing takes place"

"The art of the practitioner is to recognize, understand and validate their clients' strategies that prevent them from healing. Practitioners must guide their clients through resistances that protect them from feeling bad...The first and most decisive step in cultivation for clients is for them to be in touch with resistances and to respect them. Resistances can include resisting treatments, falling asleep, forgetting appointments, and forgetting to do homework"

Emotionally speaking – our gut feeling

Except from an article by Jill Ruttenberg, Massage Magazine USA

"Gilles Marin, master teacher and practitioner of Chi Nei Tsang (pronounced CHEE-NEE-Sahng), points out that our bodies are constantly digesting emotional "charges" we feel at the visceral level. A charge is internal pressure that can manifest in many ways - pain, nervous tension or even high blood pressure. For example, if someone smiles at you on the street, you feel something pleasant that's usually fairly easy to "digest." If, on the other hand, someone comes at you on the street with anger or aggression, you may have a harder time digesting your response, and it will take longer for that emotion to move through your body.

Some charges, Marin says, never really get digested, because they are too shocking and the body wants to protect you from feeling them. Consequently, the body finds places to hide the charge, which results in ill health. It is the enteric nervous system of the digestive tract that is most often affected when emotions are not processed.

Marin believes we process emotions the same way we process food and that poor emotional digestion leads to ill health. By exploring the abdomen, a person allows herself to connect with whatever emotions are present there. And since the emotional body, Marin asserts, has no time or space, emotional charges of the past are still just as present in our bodies as they were when the trigger occurred.

"Remember," says Marin, "the physical body is expressing over and over again whatever emotional issue is most important at that given time through its structure, its metabolism, its breathing, its movements, in any way it expresses itself. We can only process what we allow ourselves to feel."

In order to find a conduit to those emotions buried in our core, presence of mind on both the part of the client and the practitioner is required. This is no lay-back-and-enjoy-it, feel-good session. Sessions are focused, with the client's breath being directed to wherever the practitioner's hands move. In the workshops Marin teaches for the Chi Nei Tsang Institute, based in Berkeley, Calif., as much time is spent on Chi Kung (qigong) exercises to enhance the therapist's intuition and healing energy, as is spent on learning the actual hands-on techniques of Chi Nei Tsang. A great deal of attention is also paid to the energy needed by therapists to help the client feel safe with such intimate, visceral contact, and to allow them the time and space to work through these emotional issues at their own pace".

"People train to move better by doing all kinds of exercises; people educate themselves to perform better in society and in the workplace. Why not train our internal organs? Our internal organs hold our deepest secrets and are the source of life and death"