

— HAVE YOU TRIED —

Reflexology?

REFLEXOLOGY IS BASED ON THE PRINCIPLE THAT SPECIFIC POINTS FOUND ON THE FEET CAN OFFER A CONNECTION TO THE WHOLE BODY. WE FIND OUT MORE

Words: Karen Young / Photography: VTCT

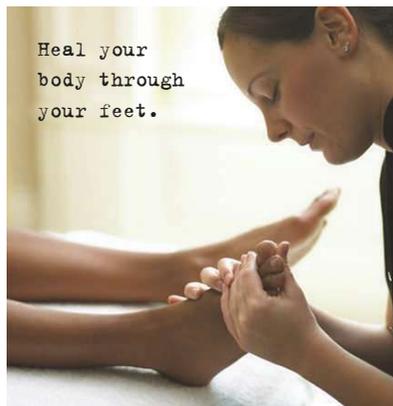
By applying specialised massage techniques to the ‘reflex points’ on the soles, tops and sides of the feet, the aim of a reflexology treatment is to help restore the body’s natural balance and improve general wellbeing. It is a treatment that can benefit people of all ages, and therapists will usually work the various reflex points using their thumbs, fingers and knuckles, though some may incorporate crystals or special tools to enhance treatment.

Before you have your first treatment, your therapist will ask you a range of questions about your health, diet and lifestyle. This will help them to decide if reflexology is right for you, or whether any adaptations to the treatment will be necessary. In some instances you may be asked to speak to your doctor or midwife before treatment, for example, if you have a long-term medical condition or you are pregnant.

For the treatment itself, you’ll remain clothed, removing just your footwear. Once you are comfortably positioned on a therapy couch or chair, the therapist will gently cleanse your feet before applying a fine powder, cream or oil, to help provide a free-flowing treatment.

As the session gets under way, the therapist may ask you to focus on gently breathing in and out, in line with their own breathing, to encourage a deeper level of relaxation.

The therapist will then massage and stretch your feet and ankles, before using a variety of techniques to ‘work’ the different reflex points on each foot. The areas treated and pressure applied will be adapted to suit your individual needs.



On the whole, you should find the treatment very relaxing, though some areas of your feet may feel ‘crunchy’ or tender when pressure is applied. This can indicate an imbalance in the body, which your therapist will aim to address by paying extra attention to that area of the foot.

In the hours immediately following treatment, you may find that you are feeling more tired than usual, that you need to urinate more frequently, or have a mild headache, but this isn’t always the case. Your therapist will give you relevant aftercare advice, including drinking plenty of water and avoiding alcohol.

Appointments typically last from 30 minutes to an hour and can cost anything between £25-£65 per session.

The Federation of Holistic Therapists (www.fht.org.uk) is the UK and Ireland’s largest professional association for complementary, holistic beauty and sports therapists.

5 benefits of reflexology

- 1 Studies show that reflexology can help to reduce levels of the stress hormone cortisol, as well as lowering anxiety, improving sleep and mood, and relieving tension.
- 2 Reflexology may help to reduce pain perception in those affected by lower back pain, multiple sclerosis and menstrual pain.
- 3 Many women, and their partners, find reflexology beneficial when trying to conceive. This is believed to be due to the balancing and relaxing effects of treatment.
- 4 Research shows that many people affected by cancer find complementary therapies such as reflexology hugely supportive through their journey, helping them to cope with their diagnosis, treatments, symptoms and rehabilitation.
- 5 As well as balancing the body as a whole, reflexology treatments involve a range of techniques designed to mobilise the toes, feet and ankles. If you suffer from stiff or tired feet and ankles, regular treatments may make a difference to your strength and flexibility. 🌿

BEFORE YOU GO
Reflexology should be used alongside standard medical care, and not as an alternative. Always consult with your GP, midwife or other health professional for medical attention and advice.