

# **Reflexotherapie**

# Reflexotherapy

## **History**

### **The Modern Era**

**What benefits does reflexology provide?**

**How does reflexology work?**

**How we do use Reflexology in our practice?**

## History

The most concrete evidence of the practice of reflexology(1) in ancient culture was the discovery of the above wall painting depicting the practice of hand and foot reflexology in the tomb of Ankhmahor (highest official after the Pharaoh) at Saqqara, Egypt which is also known as the physicians tomb.

This Egyptian wall painting is dated at the 6th dynasty, about 2330 B.C.. Prior to this discovery it was widely believed that reflexology had ancient origins only in ancient Oriental practices of acupuncture and Tui-na (Chinese traditional massage, mother of Shiatsu and Swedish Massage). Similarly, North American Indian medicine men are believed to manipulate and stimulate the feet as a part of their healing practice.

However Traditional Chinese Medicine has long touted the benefits of stimulating certain points (reflex points) along the body that correspond to specific organs or body parts. Foot reflexology is based on this theory. In the Shang Dynasty, around 1200~1700 B.C the oracle inscriptions on bones show that Tui-na was a quite important method to treat infant and adult digestive conditions.

As information is gathered it seems that variations of the modern practice of reflexology existed in all of the ancient healing cultures.

## The Modern Era

In Western culture one of the earliest books to be written on reflexology was published in 1582 by two eminent European physicians, Dr. Adamus and Dr. A'tatis. A second book by a Dr. Bell was published shortly afterwards in Leipzig.

It was, however, a Dr. William H. Fitzgerald who advanced and developed the initial popular practice of reflexology in our contemporary Western society. Dr. Fitzgerald studied at the University of Vermont and graduated in 1895. For two and a half years he practiced medicine at the Boston City Hospital before transferring to the Central London Ear, Nose and Throat Hospital, England. He also practiced under the famous Professors Politzer and Chiari at an ENT(ear, nose and throat) clinic in Vienna.

In his research Dr. Fitzgerald developed a new system of ten zones running from the top of the head to the tips of the toes and hands. Dr. Edwin Bowers, medical critic and writer, investigated Dr. Fitzgerald's claims, appeased his own skepticism, and jointly authored with Dr. Fitzgerald the book "Zone Therapy" - the name by which reflexology was known until the early 1960's.

Eunice Ingham, who initially worked with Dr. Fitzgerald as a physical therapist, gave Dr. Joe S. Riley, one of a number of doctors and dentists who practiced Zone Therapy and helped develop it, credit for teaching her. Eunice Ingham is generally recognized for her untiring devotion to and promotion of Zone Therapy. She toured North American cities annually giving Zone Therapy seminars, published charts and her two books: "Stories The Feet Can Tell" (1938) and "Stories The Feet Have Told" (1951), and established the "National Institute of Reflexology". Most authors of books and teachers of foot reflexology have acquired their basic knowledge directly or indirectly from Eunice Ingham's teaching. Eunice Ingham's nephew, Dwight Byers and his family have continued where Eunice Ingham left off at her death in 1974. Nowadays in North America Barbara and Kevin Kunz are making a great contribution to the recognition of reflexology as a valuable therapy, through their practice, educational programs and scientific research in the field represented by this marvelous healing tool.

Reflexology is a natural healing art based on the principle that there are reflexes in the feet and hands which correspond to every part of the body. Through application of pressure on particular areas of the hands and feet reflexology serves to relax tension, improve circulation and promote the natural function of the related area in the body. ...Reflexology Association of Canada. What benefits does reflexology provide? It is a method of bringing balance and healing through the stimulation of specific points on the feet, or hands. Reflexology demonstrates four main benefits:

1. Relaxation with removal of stress.
2. Enhanced circulation.
3. Assists the body to normalize its metabolism naturally.
4. Complements all other healing modalities.

The ultimate purpose of the therapy is to promote wellness; fundamentally it is a form of preventive therapy. People with serious and long-term medical problems are urged to seek the advice(2) of a physician.

## How does reflexology work?

When the reflexes are stimulated, the body's natural electrical energy works along the nervous system to clear any blockages in the corresponding zones. A reflexology session seems to break up deposits (felt as a sandy or gritty area under the skin) which may interfere with the flow of the body's electrical energy in the nervous system. Manipulating specific reflexes removes stress, activating a parasympathetic response in the body to enable the blockages to be released by a physiological change in the body. With stress removed and circulation enhanced, the body is allowed to return to a state of homeostasis(3).

Traditionally it is believed that energy flows through channel in the body. When these become blocked or depleted, parts of the body are starved of energy and become diseased. Reflexology clears these channels and restores the free flow of energy. A more modern theory is that reflexology works through the nervous system. There are 70000 nerve endings in the feet which connect through the spinal cord to all parts of the body (you sneeze or get a runny nose when you walk barefoot in cold water). By working on the nerve endings, reflexology stimulates the nervous system back into normal functioning. Other theories include interaction with electromagnetic (bio-energetic) fields, working with the body's own natural vibrations and healing potential, or breaking down waste products which accumulate in the feet due to stress, disease, or lack of exercise.

## How we do use Reflexology in our practice?

Basically we aim at applying in our practice the reflexology principles of Barbara and Kevin Kunz, as well as Traditional Chinese Medicine theory. Our practice is mainly oriented to alleviate stress because reflexology is particularly effective in stress related conditions. It provides a deep sense of relaxation so that tensions are released, circulation is improved and toxins can be more easily eliminated from the body. As the body's natural energies flow more freely there is an increased sense of well-being and health. With respect to stress management the amount of technique application of

reflexology, and number of sessions is strictly related to the goals and expectation of the individual who receives the therapy. Reflexology will not cure entrenched disease, though it can usefully support the work of conventional medicine - for example, Charing Cross Hospital (London, UK) routinely offers reflexology to cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy. A single treatment will not reverse problems which are the result of years of misuse, poor diet or stress, but a series of treatments can help conditions as diverse as tension headaches, IBS, frozen shoulder, low fertility. Ways of effecting reflex areas and points:

- 1) Thoughts;
- 4) Implements;
- 5) Sound;
- 6) Color;
- 7) Other forms of vibration and pressure;
- 8) Electrical stimulation (mA).

2) Diabetes patients in particular are urged to approach this therapy cautiously. Likewise pregnant women are cautioned emphatically to avoid reflexology during the early phases of pregnancy altogether, as accidentally induced labor and subsequent premature delivery can result from reflexology treatment.

3) Homeostasis is the “automatic” process that the body incorporates to bring it back to the “normal” state. In other words it is the main component of the “natural” healing process.

# Reflexoterapia

Ca ramura a medicinei orientale, **reflexologia** este stiinta zonelor reflexogene ale organismului situate pe suprafata corpului, in general cu efect distal (la distanta fata de organele pe care le reprezinta). Organele sunt componente inseparabile in ansamblul organismului uman, avand legatura vasculara, nervoasa si energetica directa cu zonele corespunzatoare reflexogene. Astfel, se cunosc zonele de proiectie la nivelul picioarelor, mainilor, coloanei vertebrale, limbii, urechii, intestinului gros, etc.

Din punctul de vedere al medicinei alopate, reflexul este activitatea fundamentala a sistemului nervos, cu ajutorul caruia se regleaza relatiile dintre organe si se stabilesc relatiile dintre organism si mediul inconjurator.

Componentele principale ale reflexologiei sunt:

- a) reflexoevaluarea
- b) reflexoterapia

a) Reflexoevaluarea - consta in reperarea punctelor sensibile sau dureroase din zonele reflexogene. Prin reflexoevaluare se poate descoperi o suferinta morfo-functionala sau dezechilibru al organului corespondent, palpand zona lui reflexogena, zona foarte bogata in terminatii nervoase si vasculare. Prin palpare apare o durere care este direct proportionala cu magnitudinea afectiunii organului corespondent. Pentru evaluarea starii de sanatate se folosesc proiectiile din talpi si din palme. Evaluarea in palme este greoaie si mai putin precisa, deoarece activitatea zilnica la care sunt supuse palmele duce la scaderea sensibilizarii pe care o urmarim in cadrul unei evaluari a starii de sanatate.

Reflexoevaluarea cere atat un studiu amanuntit , experienta si diversitate in cazuistica, precum si solide cunostinte de anatomie, fiziologie si patologie privind organismul uman cat si folosirea altor mijloace de evaluare spre a stabil un asa numit "diagnostic diferential".

b) Reflexoterapia - este componenta reflexologiei care se ocupa cu tratamentul prin masaj al punctelor reflexe diagnosticate ca fiind sensibile (dureroase). Masajul se practica cu varful degetului mare de la mana (policele) sau cu articulatiile interfalangiene, intr-o ordine care tine seama de ecoul biologic al fiecarui organ reprezentat.

Reflexoterapia este un masaj digital (sau folosind instrumente simple pentru marirea si grabirea efectului) executat pe extremitatile corpului (picior, mana; cel executat pe cutie craniana, ureche porta numele de presopunctura), in scopul:

- relaxarii
- reechilibrarii circulatiei sangvine si limfatice
- imbunatatirii activitatilor organelor interne si a metabolismului
- precum si cresterea capacitatii imunitare a organismului.

Zonele reflexogene sunt puncte sau zone (in talpa sau pe gamba) care sunt in stransa legatura cu organele interne ale corpului.

### **Istorie**

#### **Era Moderna**

#### **Cum lucreaza reflexoterapia?**

#### **Cand si cum se poate aplica reflexoterapia?**

#### **Care sunt contraindicatiile reflexoterapiei?**

## **Istorie**

Cele mai concrete evidente ale practicarii reflexoterapiei in antichitate a fost descoperirea picturii reprezentata alaturat, reprezentand o scena de practica a reflexoterapiei mainilor si picioarelor in mormantul lui Ankhmahor (cea mai inalta functie a suitei faraonilor) la Saqqara, Egipt care este de asemenea cunoscut ca si "mormantul doctorului".

Acesta picture murala este datata ca fiind pictata in timpul celei de-a VI-a dinastii, aproximativa 2330 BC. Inainte de acesta descoperire s-a crezut ca originile reflexoterapiei sunt indubitabil legate de practica straveche a Tuina (masaj traditional chinez parintele, masajului japonez Shiatsu ) parte componenta a Medicinii Traditionale Chineze (TCM ). Similar, Medicina Traditionala Nord Americana (a indienilor nativi) este recunoscuta a manipula si stimula talpile picioarelor ca parte a practicii de vindecare. Oricum, TCM a studiat vreme de milenii beneficiile de stimulare a punctelor reflexe pe care se bazeaza teoria reflexologiei picioarelor. In dinastia Shang, (1700-1200) BC inscriptii pe oase arata ca Tuina a fost o metoda imprtanta in a trata

afectiunile digestive ale copiilor si adultilor prin ceea ce numim astazi reflexologie. Multe descoperiri atesta faptul ca reflexologia era folosita, cu mici diferente de tehnica si dispunere a zonelor reflexogene, ca metoda de vindecare de catre majoritatea culturilor stravechi.

## Era Moderna

In cultura Occidentala prima carte scrisa care face referire la reflexologie a fost publicata in 1582 de catre doi eminenti medici ai vremii: Dr. Adamus si Dr. A'tatis. O a doua carte a fost publicata in aceeași perioada la Leipzig de un anume Dr.Bell.

A fost insa meritul medicului american Dr. William H. Fitzgerald care a dezvoltat si folosit in Occident aceasta populara stiinta a practicarii reflexologiei in perioada contemporana. Dr. Fitzgerald a studiat la Universitatea din Vermont si a absolvit in 1895. Pentru o perioada practica medicina la Boston, dupa care se muta la Londra unde practica la Spitalul de Nas, Gat si Urechi (ORL) apoi la Viena.

Intors in Statele Unite Dr Fitzgerald se dedica dezvoltarii un nou sistem de reflexologie bazat pe zece zone distincte de impartire a corpului de la crestet la talpi in baza carora erau identificate punctele reflexe de pe maini si picioare. Dr. Edwin Bowers, scriitor si critic de literatura medicala depaseste limitele propriului scepticism si publica alaturi de Dr. Fitzgerald cartea "Zone Therapy" (Terapia pe Zone) nume sub care a fost cunoscuta de altfel reflexologia pana la inceputul anilor 1960.

Eunice Ingham, care initial a lucrat cu Dr. Fitzgerald ca terapeut incepe sa lucreze cu Dr. Joe S. Riley, unul dintre numerosii doctori care practicau Terapia Zonala, apoi lucreaza independent fiind considerata promotora reflexologiei moderne americane.

A calatorit in marile orase americane oferind seminarii, publicand si cele doua carti: "Povestiri pe care picioarele le pot spune"(1938) si "Povestiri pe care le-au spus picioarele". Si infiinteaza in Florida (Petersburg) Institutul International de Reflexologie. Multi autori de carti si profesori au preluat conceptele de baza ale reflexologiei promovate de Eunice Ingham. Institutul infiintat de Eunice fiinteaza si astazi fiind condus de catre Dwight Byers, nepotul acesteia. Eunice se sfarseste din viata in 1974.

In zilele noastre, in Nord America, Barbara and Kevin Kunz sunt aceia care aduc o mare contributie la recunoastrea reflexologiei ca valoroasa terapie , prin practica lor, programul educational , cercetare stiintifica pe taramul acestei minunate metode de vindecare.



## Cum lucreaza Reflexologia?

Cand punctele reflexe sunt stimulate, energia electrica naturala proprie sistemului nervos lucreaza spre a elimina blocajele ce au aparut in anumite zone ale corpului. O sesiune de reflexologie inlatura cristalele (identificate ca depozite de toxine) si care pot interfera cu fluxul de energie din sistemul nervos. Prin manipularea unor anumite puncte reflexe, activand raspunsul parasimpatic al sistemului nervos, blocajele pot fi inlaturate prin schimbari fiziologice ale diferitelor sisteme ale organismului. Prin inlaturarea stresului si imbunatatirea circulatiei permitem corpului sa se reintoarca la starea de homeostatie (proprietate a organismului de a mentine, în limite foarte apropiate, constantele mediului intern) care reprezinta mecanismul nostru de autovindecare.

In mod traditional (TCM) se crede ca energia (Qi) circula prin intermediul meridianelor corpului. Cand energia este blocata intr-o anumita parte a corpului acea parte a corpului nu mai este alimentata optim cu energie si se imbolnaveste.

O teorie mai moderana spune ca in talpa exista peste 70000 de terminatii nervoase conectate prin maduva sirei spinarii cu toate partile corpului (dupa cum stiti , cand stati cu picioarele in pa rece sau va e frig, stranutati sau va curge nasul). Lucrand pe aceste terminatiile nervoase reflexoterapia stimuleaza sistemul nervos spre a calauzi corpul spre o functionarea normala.

Alte teorii mentioneaza interactiunea dintre campul electromagnetic al mainilor terapeutului (bioenergia...a carui prezenta este de altfel confirmata stiintific) cu corpul celui care este tratat. Terapeutul lucreaza astfel cu sistemul bioenergetic propriu si cu abilitatile de a vindeca deblocand toxinele acumulate in talpile picioarelor ca urmare a stresului, bloii sau lipsa de exercitiu.

## Cand si cum se poate aplica reflexoterapia?

### 1) Cand trebuie utilizate zonele reflexe

Atunci cand apare o durere acuta, masajul zonelor reflexe face minuni; acest efect se instaleaza probabil si datorita eliberarii endorfinelor, care au un rol de anestezic. Fara indoiala ca bolile cronice presupun mai mult de 10 sedinte, dar dupa cateva saptamani, uneori luni, veti putea constata o ameliorare evidenta, terminatiile nervoase devenind mai putin dureroase.

Pentru a restabili echilibrul glandelor endocrine, reflexologia este un instrument de foarte buna calitate care imbunatateste productia de hormoni la nivelul dorit.

## 2) Cum trebuie masate zonele reflexe

Cand se maseaza zonele intinse, sensul de lucru este dispre degete spre calcai si nu invers, pentru a nu frana curentul limfatic care, de cele mai multe ori, este deja perturbat, iar in cazul intestinului gros se va masa in sensul de evacuare.

Nu este indicat sa dislocam mai multe toxine decat poate elimina rinichiul si detoxifia ficatul, splina, sistemul limfatic, fortand astfel posibilitatile reale ale organismului.

O sedinta de reflexoterapie dureaza aproximativ 50-60 de minute. Pentru reflexologia generala a piciorului, 5-10 secunde sunt suficiente pentru o prima presare a unui punct se face o scurta pauza, dupa care masajul se reia. Aceasta presiune intermitenta este indicata in special pentru punctele foarte dureroase.

## Care sunt contraindicatiile Reflexoterapiei?

- Insuficienta renala acuta
- litiaza renala (pietre mari care nu pot fi eliminate pe cale naturala)
- litiaza biliara
- in stare de infarct
- varice deschise
- hemoragii
- sarcina
- infectii cutanate, rani la talpa piciorului
- nu se practica decat la 2 ore dupa luarea unei mese. Dupa terapie timp de doua ore nu se va servi masa, deoarece pentru digestie este necesara o cantitate mare de energie, iar masajul foloseste energia pentru refacerea unei functii organice.

Pe periada de administrare a sedintelor de reflexologie:

- nu alcool, tutun, cafea
- dieta echilibrata, bogata in legume, fructe si sucuri naturale.