

HEADACHES

There are many factors that can contribute to a headache, but tension is nearly always a culprit. To most successfully deal with a headache, experiment with the sequences below and then apply reflexology techniques to the appropriate reflex areas (*see chart opposite*), depending on whether you have a migraine or whether the pain is in a particular part of your head.

RESEARCH

A Danish study in 1997 found that reflexology helped ease headaches. Most importantly, many participants came to think of "working on" their headaches rather than just "living with" them. The study concluded, "The patients see themselves as vital agents in the process of illness and of curing themselves."

Working the hands

Hand reflexology has many advantages. You can work your hands discreetly even in an office or other public place. Reflexes on the digits correspond to the head and neck, providing an easily accessible

target area. Neck tension often contributes to headaches, and working the neck reflex areas may relieve this. Remember to work both hands evenly, experimenting to see what works best for you.



1 First, work the NECK and HEAD reflex areas to relieve tension using the walk down/pull against dessert (*see page 99*). Try to visualize your neck and head stretching as you stretch the fingers.



2 Work the HEAD, FACE, and SINUS reflex areas of the digits, focusing on tender areas. Work the areas just below the nails, seeking out sensitive spots. Depending on where the headache is located, you may get better results with the left or the right hand.



3 Move on to work the HEAD and BRAIN reflex areas on the thumb and fingers with the hook and back up technique. Search with your fingers for the most sensitive areas. Working these may help to relieve tension and pain.



Working the feet

When you are working the feet, remember to carry out the whole sequence on each foot. One foot may be more tender than the other, which can indicate that more work in that area is needed. If you are prone to headaches, working on your feet regularly may help to prevent them.

1 Begin by thumb walking through the SOLAR PLEXUS reflex area to relieve tension throughout the body. Make multiple passes.

TYPES OF HEADACHE

Depending on your headache, work the following reflex areas.

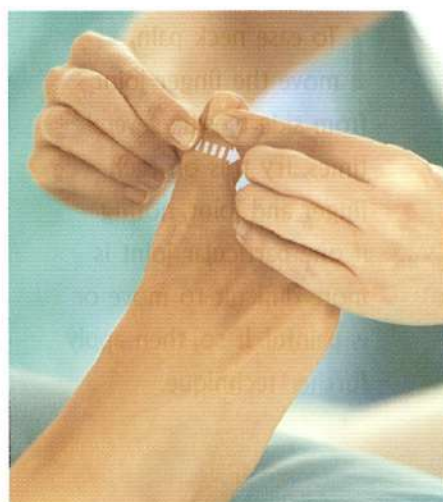
MIGRAINE HEADACHE: Thumb walk along the TAILBONE reflex area on the foot.

MIGRAINE HEADACHE WITH VISION IMPAIRMENT: Walk down/pull against through the NECK reflex area on the index finger.

HEADACHE AT TOP OF HEAD: Work the HEAD reflex on the top of the big toe.

HEADACHE AT SIDE OF HEAD: Work the HEAD reflex on the side of the big toe.

PAIN AT BACK OF HEAD: Thumb walk the HEAD reflex area on the base of the ball of the big toes.



2 Next, hold the toe in place and roll your fingertip over the top of the toe. Repeat on the other foot. Work any sensitive areas you find thoroughly.



3 To relieve tension in the head and neck, thumb walk down all sides of the big toe, to the base of the toe. Repeat on the other foot.

BACKACHE & NECK PAIN

Backache and neck pain mean something different for each of us. Start by locating the pain in your body, and then use the foot and hand maps (*see pp. 16–23*) to find the reflex areas that correspond to the ache. Remember that tension in muscles and joints frequently contribute to backache and neck pain, so try to work reflex areas that relate to more general areas of tension.

Working the hand

Hand reflexology is convenient for working with backache and neck pain, since you can apply technique discreetly at almost any time.

RESEARCH

Several recent studies found that 74–98 percent of reflexology recipients found the treatment effective for relieving their neck and lower back pain. Self-help reflexology was suggested to continue the benefits.

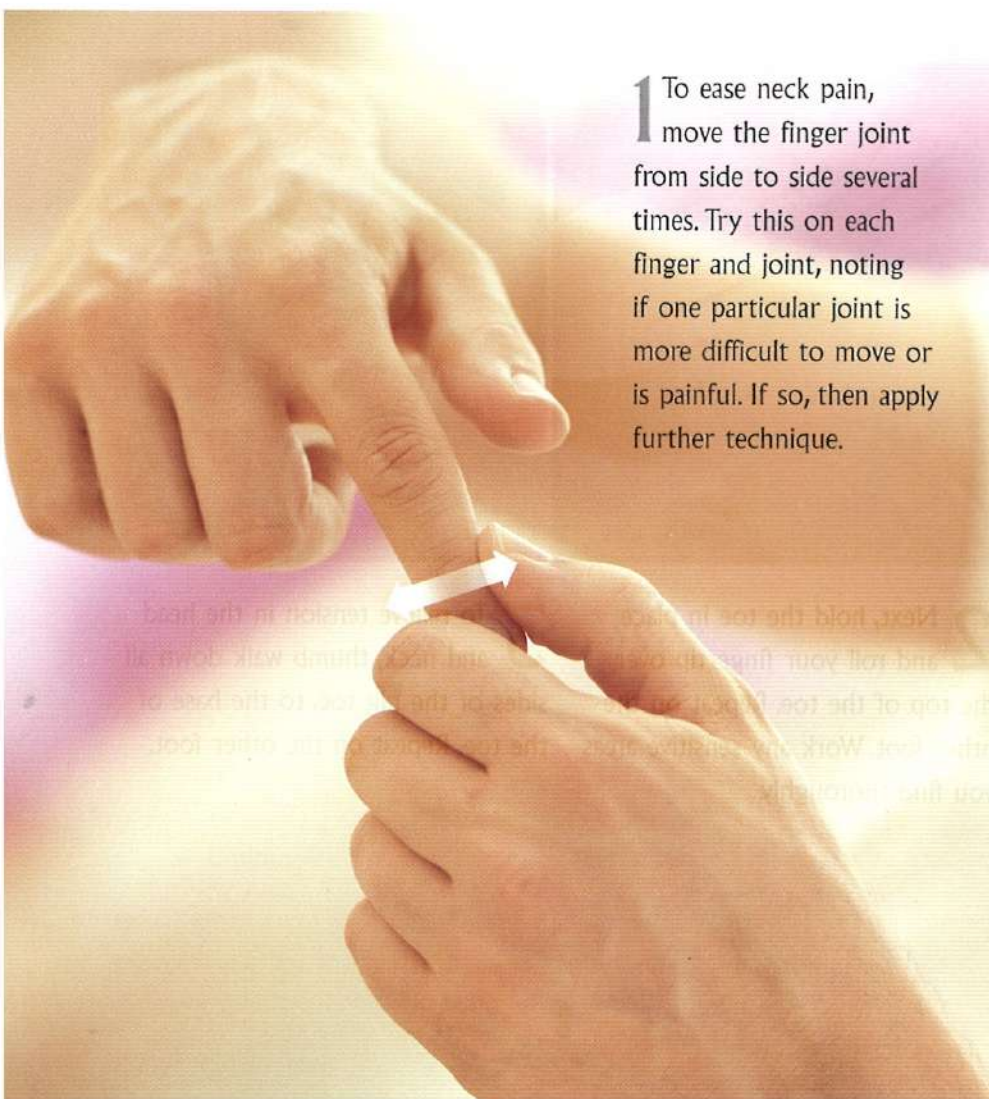


1 To ease neck pain, move the finger joint from side to side several times. Try this on each finger and joint, noting if one particular joint is more difficult to move or is painful. If so, then apply further technique.

2 Now walk down/pull against through the NECK reflex area. To increase the stretch in each finger, lower the wrist and press harder with your thumb. Thumb walk forward through the area.



3 Apply the palm mover (*see p. 101*) to relax the UPPER and LOWER BACK reflex areas. Press with the fingers while pulling up with the thumb to create counter-movement.



Working the foot

For best results, before you start applying reflexology to the foot, consult the maps (see pp. 16–19) to pinpoint reflex areas that correspond to the pain. Remember to repeat the sequence on both feet. You may find reflex areas on one foot to be especially sensitive, so target them with more work.



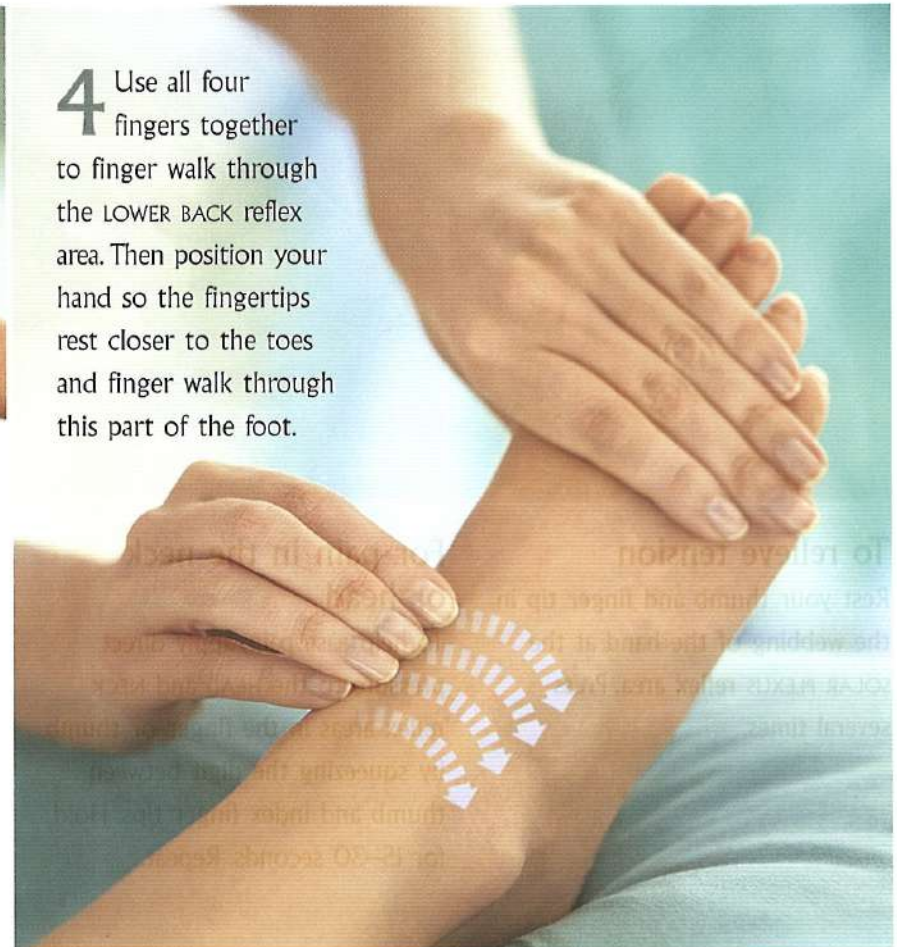
1 Begin by working the **NECK** reflex area to release tension in the corresponding part of the body. Thumb walk around the base of the big toe, making several successive passes.



2 Work from the midback on the **SPINE** reflex area to that for the area between the **SHOULDER BLADES**. Problems in this part of the back can contribute to tension and pain in the neck and upper back.



3 Start from the **TAILBONE** reflex area and thumb walk through the **LUMBAR SPINE** reflex area several times. This is a broad area, so cover it from several different angles.



4 Use all four fingers together to finger walk through the **LOWER BACK** reflex area. Then position your hand so the fingertips rest closer to the toes and finger walk through this part of the foot.

PAIN

In reflexology, pain is addressed by applying direct pressure to the relevant reflex area. First find the area as reflected on the foot or hand. Work that specific reflex area by applying a direct, steady, and constant pressure to the reflex area until the pain eases.

Working the solar plexus reflex area and applying a full series of desserts also helps to ease general tension levels. However, you should always have any unknown pain diagnosed by your doctor.

WHERE DOES IT HURT?

Begin by noting the location of the pain on your body. Next, find the corresponding reflex areas by looking at the foot and hand maps (see pp. 16–23). To orient yourself, remember that the right-hand side of the body is reflected on the right hand and foot, and the left-hand side of the body on the left hand and foot.

Working the hands

Here are suggestions to ease tension, which often contributes to pain, and to relieve pain in the head

and chest areas. When you press into the reflex area, avoid your thumbnail digging into the hand.



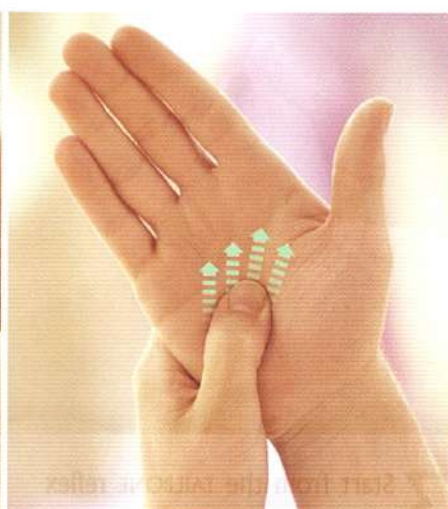
To relieve tension

Rest your thumb and finger tip in the webbing of the hand at the SOLAR PLEXUS reflex area. Press several times.



For pain in the neck or head

To help ease pain, apply direct pressure to the HEAD and NECK reflex areas in the finger or thumb by squeezing the digit between thumb and index finger tips. Hold for 15–30 seconds. Repeat.



For pain in the abdomen or chest

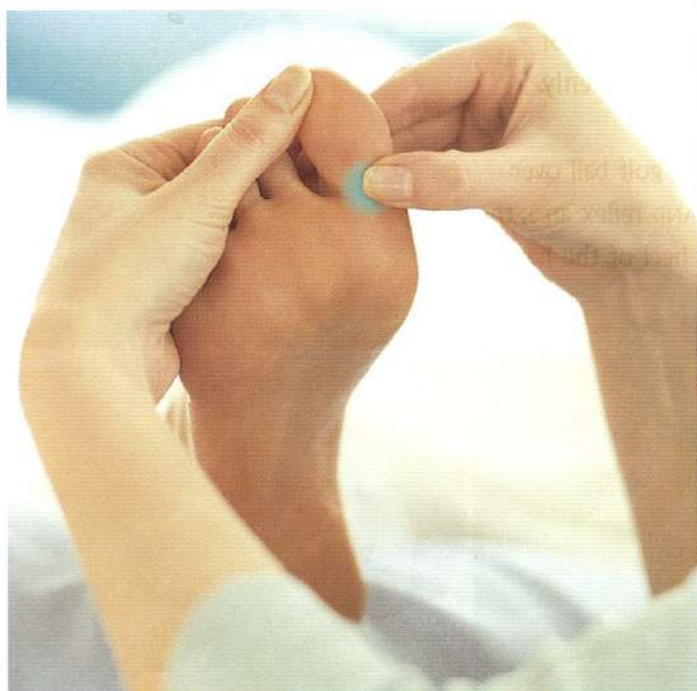
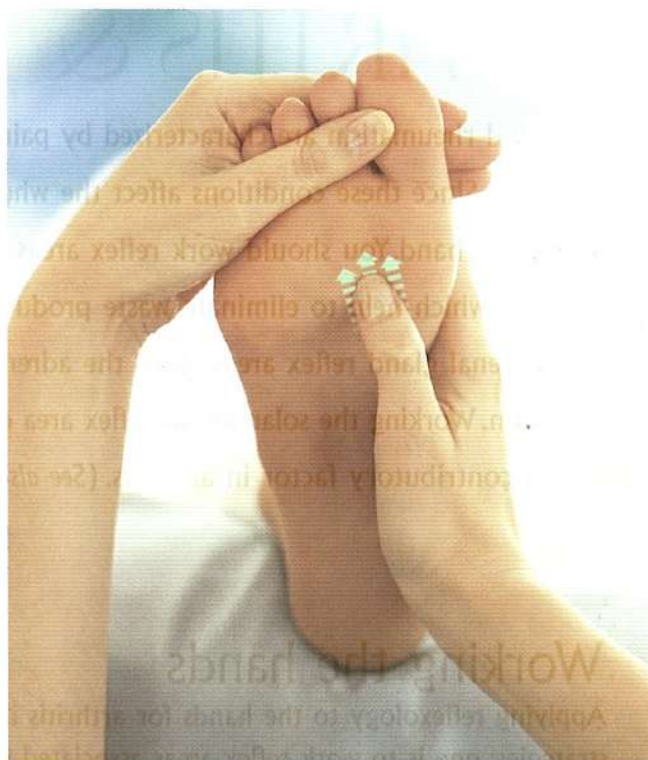
If the pain is in the trunk of the body, work the palm of the hand. Press your thumb into the reflex area that corresponds to the site of the pain. Hold for 15–30 seconds to see if the pain lessens. Reposition your thumb and try applying pressure to the most sensitive area.

Working the feet

First work the solar plexus reflex area (*see below*) to ease tension, and then apply direct pressure to the reflex area that reflects the location of the pain. Here are suggestions for pain in the neck and trunk areas.

To relieve tension

To relax the foot, thumb walk through the SOLAR PLEXUS reflex area (*see right*). Go on to apply a full series of desserts (*see pp. 68–73*).



For pain in the neck or head

To ease pain, apply pressure to the HEAD or NECK reflex sites on the toes (*see pp. 16–19*) by pinching the selected area. Hold for 15–30 seconds, or until the pain lessens.



For pain in the abdomen or chest

If the pain lies in the trunk of the body, apply technique to the sole of the foot. Place your thumb on the reflex area selected and drop your wrist. Maintain this position. See if pain is lessened with a 15–30 second hold. Reposition your thumb and try again.

ARTHRITIS & RHEUMATISM

Arthritis and rheumatism are characterized by painful inflammation of the joints. Since these conditions affect the whole body, work the whole foot or hand. You should work reflex areas corresponding to the kidneys, which help to eliminate waste products from the body, and the adrenal gland reflex areas, since the adrenals help fight inflammation. Working the solar plexus reflex area can relieve tension, which is a contributory factor in arthritis. (See also *Pain*, pp. 140–41).

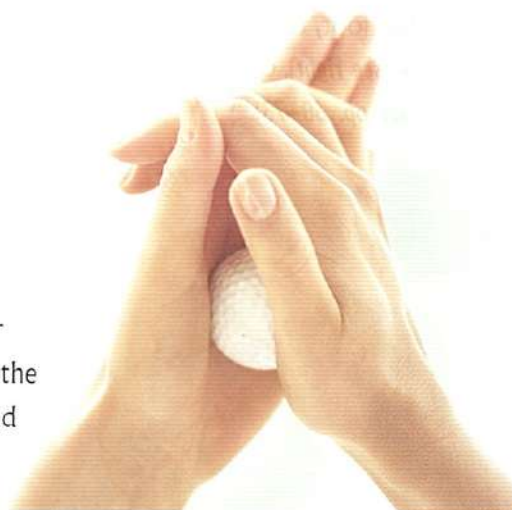
RESEARCH

Studies in China, which were reported in 1996, suggested that reflexology had a beneficial effect for 91–95 percent of those suffering from arthritis. Self-help reflexology appeared to help maintain these results.

Working the hands

Applying reflexology to the hands for arthritis involves two strategies: one is to work reflex areas associated with the overall condition and the other is to encourage movement of stiff fingers and hands. Remember to work both hands evenly.

1 Begin by rolling a golf ball over the ADRENAL GLAND reflex area, the general area in the heel of the hand below the thumb.



2 Go on to pinch the KIDNEY reflex area with finger and thumb. Hold for several seconds.



3 Move the finger joints from side to side to mobilize the joints. Work all fingers evenly.



4 To maintain their flexibility, apply the walk down/pull against technique to the fingers.

Working the feet

If you are working with someone with arthritis, be gentle, and maintain eye contact to ensure you are working within their comfort zone.

1 Begin by thumb walking repeatedly through the SOLAR PLEXUS reflex area, which creates a relaxing effect.

POINTS TO REMEMBER

Be aware of the individual's comfort zone. Even a light touch could be painful.

A sudden release of toxins with flu-like symptoms is a common reaction to reflexology in arthritic people. To avoid this, work lightly for short periods of time, and focus on the organs of elimination such as the kidneys.

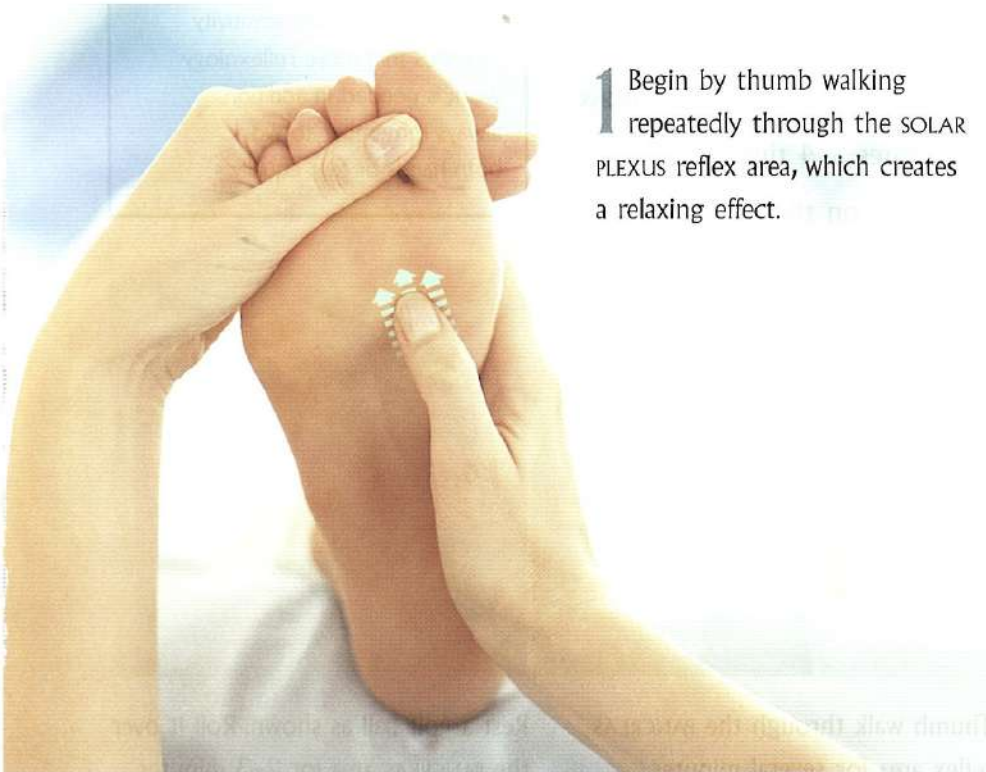
Proceed slowly with hand desserts, especially those applied to the fingers. Apply lightly and for a short period of time.

If you are arthritic and applying self-help techniques, make life easier for yourself. Consider using a self-help tool, such as the eraser end of a pencil, to apply pressure.

2 Thumb walk repeatedly along the KIDNEY reflex area. The kidneys can be useful in eliminating waste materials that can gather around the joints.

3 Thumb walk through the LYMPH GLAND reflex area several times. These glands remove toxins and aid the removal of material stirred up by reflexology work.

4 Move on to work the ADRENAL GLAND reflex area. The adrenals help fight inflammation.



OTHER HEALTH CONCERNS

POINTS TO REMEMBER

If part of the reflex area feels sensitive, focus particularly on that area. In general, sensitivity indicates that more reflexology work is needed. In addition, always remember to work both hands or feet equally.

When using this section, experiment to see what works best. Unless otherwise stated, apply reflexology techniques 3–4 times for several minutes throughout the day, and then repeat on the other foot.

Low energy

Fatigue, particularly in the afternoon, may indicate your blood sugar levels are low. The pancreas is involved in regulating blood sugar levels and working the PANCREAS reflex area as shown 3–4 times a day may help.

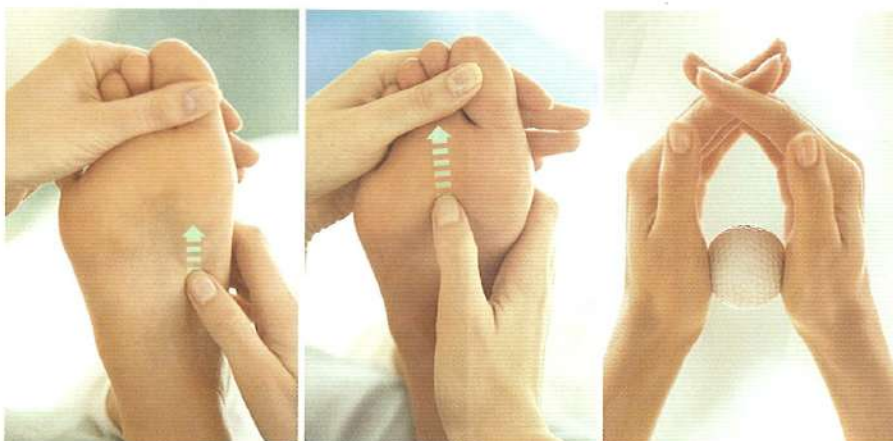


Thumb walk through the PANCREAS reflex area for several minutes.

Rest a golf ball as shown. Roll it over the PANCREAS area for 2–3 minutes.

Asthma

An allergic condition, asthma is characterized by wheezing, coughing, and difficulty in exhaling. Targeting the ADRENAL GLAND reflex area may help to relieve symptoms because improved production of adrenal gland hormones is believed to help the lungs relax and function better. Using a golf ball on the hands is our favorite technique for asthma.



Make several thumb walking passes through the ADRENAL GLAND reflex area.

Thumb walk several times through the LUNG reflex area, and work throughout the ball of the foot.

Roll the golf ball, working the ADRENAL GLAND reflex area until symptoms diminish.

Allergies, hay fever & sinus problems

Inflammation is a common symptom of these conditions. Cortisol, a hormone secreted by the adrenal glands, helps reduce levels of the chemical that causes inflammation. To help the adrenal glands function well, work the ADRENAL GLAND reflex areas 3–4 times a day for several minutes.



Thumb walk through the ADRENAL GLAND reflex area (*see above*).



Roll a golf ball around the ADRENAL GLAND reflex area (*see above*).

Bronchitis

This condition is an inflammation of the bronchial (lung) tubes. To help reduce inflammation, target the ADRENAL GLAND reflex areas (*see above*). In addition, working the LUNG reflex areas may also help reduce bronchitis symptoms.



Use a foot roller to work the LUNG reflex area (*see above*). Also work the ADRENAL GLAND reflex area.



Thumb walk through the LUNG area on the hand (*see above*). Then target the ADRENAL GLAND reflex area.

Sore throat & tonsillitis

If you have a sore throat or tonsillitis, you can try applying technique to the NECK reflex area and to the ADRENAL GLAND reflex area to help soothe symptoms and reduce inflammation. If the hand reflex areas are overly sensitive, work the corresponding area on the foot, and vice versa.



Thumb walk over the NECK reflex area for several minutes (*see above*). Also work the ADRENAL GLAND reflex area.



Thumb walk repeatedly through the NECK reflex area (*see above*). Also work the ADRENAL GLAND reflex area.

Tinnitus

This condition causes a ringing, hissing, or buzzing noise in the ear. Apply technique on the hand or foot EAR reflex on the same side as the ringing ear and work until the noise subsides. Note how much time is required. Work 3–4 times a day for several minutes as a preventive measure.



Apply thumb walking technique to the EAR reflex area.



Pinch the EAR reflex area in between the little and ring fingers.

Eye disorders

For eyestrain, you can work the EYE reflex areas until your eyes feel more comfortable. If you have conjunctivitis or some other eye concern, work the eye reflex areas 3–4 times a day for several minutes.



Apply the thumb walking technique to the EYE reflex area.



Pinch the EYE reflex area in between the ring and middle fingers.

Skin disorders

For general skin disorders such as acne, working the KIDNEY reflex area may help to aid elimination of toxins that could be contributing to the problem.

(For recovery from painful skin conditions such as burns or shingles see Pain, pp. 140–41.)



Apply thumb walking technique to the KIDNEY reflex area 3–4 times throughout the day.



Pinch deep into the webbing in the KIDNEY reflex area 3–4 times throughout the day.

Heart problems

For heart conditions, 3–4 times a day work the HEART reflex area, the SOLAR PLEXUS area (to aid relaxation) and the BRAIN STEM area (the brain stem regulates some of the heart's activities). If it's inconvenient to work the feet, try working the hands.

Thumb walk through the HEART reflex area (the joint area below the thumb), making repeated passes.



Work the HEART reflex area using the thumb walking technique. Cover the entire reflex area, which lies below the big toe on the ball of the foot. Make repeated passes.



Now work the SOLAR PLEXUS reflex area, applying several light thumb walking passes for general relaxation.



Finally, thumb walk through the BRAIN STEM reflex area, making several passes.

High blood pressure

Plenty of relaxation is key for people with high blood pressure. For optimum relaxation, a full foot sequence is ideal, but you can also try just working the SOLAR PLEXUS area. Desserts (see pp. 68–73 and 98–101) have a calming effect.



Apply the thumb walking technique to the SOLAR PLEXUS reflex area for several minutes 3–4 times a day.



Pinch the SOLAR PLEXUS reflex area in the webbing of the hand. Repeat for several minutes 3–4 times a day.

Fluid retention

The lymphatic system helps distribute fluids around the body. Working the LYMPH GLAND reflex areas in

order to help the system work more efficiently may help to reduce fluid retention.



Finger walk through the LYMPH GLAND and LOWER BACK reflex areas using all four fingers. When you take your fingers away, do you see an indentation in the swelling? Go on to work other areas of swelling.



Apply several thumb walking passes to the LYMPH GLAND reflex area. Pause and note any change in the appearance of swelling. Work through the reflex areas on both ankles, targeting areas of swelling.



Place a finger on the LYMPH GLAND reflex area and rotate on a point by circling the hand being worked several times. Reposition the finger and repeat across the area, before working the other hand.

Stroke

A stroke, which is the result of the brain's blood supply being interrupted (often as the result of a blood vessel rupture), can cause unconsciousness, paralysis, and other problems. Apply technique for several minutes 3–4 times a day to the BRAIN reflex area on the side of the body opposite the side that is paralyzed. This targets the reflex area representing the site of the blood vessel rupture.



Apply the thumb walking technique to the BRAIN reflex area on the ball of the toe. Roll the index fingertip over the BRAIN reflex area several times as well.



Thumb walk throughout the BRAIN reflex area—the ball of the thumb.

Anemia

Anemia is a disorder in which hemoglobin, the iron-rich protein in the red blood cells, is deficient or abnormal. The SPLEEN reflex area is targeted because this organ controls the quality of red blood cells circulating around the body.



Thumb walk over the SPLEEN reflex area 3–4 times throughout the day for several minutes.



Thumb walk through the SPLEEN reflex area 3–4 times throughout the day for several minutes.

Dizziness, fainting & fever

The PITUITARY GLAND reflex area is targeted. For the first two concerns, apply technique until discomfort subsides. For fever, work the area hourly.



Apply hook and back up to the PITUITARY GLAND reflex area. If dizziness persists, also pinch the INNER EAR reflex area (*see p. 77*).



Apply hook and back up to the PITUITARY GLAND reflex area. If dizziness persists, also pinch the INNER EAR reflex area (*see p. 107*).

Stomachache

For a stomachache apply technique to the STOMACH reflex area until discomfort diminishes. If you are prone to stomachaches, work this reflex area several times a day as a preventive measure.



Apply the thumb walking technique to the STOMACH reflex area.



Use a golf ball to work the STOMACH reflex area on the hands.

Heartburn

A sensation of burning in the esophagus, heartburn is caused by acid liquid traveling upward from the stomach. To help bring relief, work the SOLAR PLEXUS area for several minutes because the esophagus extends through the solar plexus.



Thumb walk over the SOLAR PLEXUS reflex area. Apply pressure to any spot that seems sensitive.



Roll the golf ball over the SOLAR PLEXUS reflex area, which includes within it that of the ESOPHAGUS.

Diarrhea, colitis & diverticulitis

For all these conditions, apply reflexology technique to the COLON reflex area 3–4 times a day for several minutes.



Apply the thumb walking technique to the COLON area.



Work the COLON reflex area, using the thumb walking technique.

Hemorrhoids

To use reflexology for hemorrhoids, which are varicose veins of the rectum, you need to work the anus reflex area, which lies within the TAILBONE reflex area. Experiment by working this area on both your feet and hands until you find a particularly sensitive spot. Target this with reflexology work.



Apply the thumb walking technique to the TAILBONE reflex area and heel 3–4 times a day for several minutes.



Make repeated thumb walking passes through the TAILBONE reflex area. Try the other hand as well.

Bladder & kidney infections

For these health concerns, apply reflexology technique to the KIDNEY and BLADDER reflex areas and (to help fight inflammation) to the ADRENAL GLAND reflex area. If the reflex area on the hand is overly sensitive, work the foot instead, and vice versa.



Thumb walk over the BLADDER reflex area 3–4 times a day. Also apply reflexology technique to the ADRENAL GLAND reflex area (see p. 80).



Make several passes over the KIDNEY reflex area. Also apply reflexology technique to the ADRENAL GLAND reflex area (see p. 104).

Diabetes & hypoglycemia (low blood sugar)

Insulin, a hormone made by the pancreas, is needed to metabolize sugar in the body. In some forms of diabetes, too little insulin is produced, allowing blood sugar levels to rise to potentially dangerous levels. For both diabetes and hypoglycemia, the PANCREAS reflex area is targeted, as is the KIDNEY area to help eliminate toxins.



Work the PANCREAS reflex area, making successive thumb walking passes, particularly on the left foot.



Apply the thumb walking technique repeatedly to the KIDNEY reflex area. Work both feet evenly.



Roll a golf ball over the PANCREAS reflex area several times a day. If the surface of the golf ball is too hard for your hands, use it only briefly.



With your finger and thumb pinch the KIDNEY reflex area, repeatedly pressing deep into the webbing of the hand.

CAUTION

Do not over-work the PANCREAS reflex area—apply pressure only briefly and gently.

Sciatica

If the sciatic nerve is compressed, it can cause pain, known as sciatica, in the buttock and leg. Reflexology technique is applied to the SCIATIC NERVE reflex area. For pain on the left side of the body, work the left hand or foot. For pain on the right side, work the right hand or foot.



Apply the finger walking technique to the SCIATIC NERVE reflex area 3–4 times throughout the day.



Use all four fingers to finger walk across the LOWER BACK and SCIATIC NERVE reflex areas.

Menstrual cramps & PMS

Pain and other symptoms are common during or prior to menstrual periods. For PMS, work the UTERUS reflex area on feet or hands every day

throughout the month. For painful periods, work the same area on the hands or the feet 3–4 times a day until the pain subsides.



Rest your finger on the UTERUS reflex area, and apply the rotating on a point technique (see p. 66). Go on to work other foot.



Pressing your thumb into the UTERUS reflex area, turn your ankle in circles, first clockwise and then counterclockwise. Go on to work the other foot.



Place your thumb on the OVARY reflex area. Thumb walk through the area making several passes.

Insomnia

Whether you are unable to fall asleep or wake up too early, reflexology can help you relax. For best results, ask a partner or friend to work on your feet just before bedtime. Follow these with a relaxing series of desserts (see pp. 68–73).



Make successive light thumb walking passes over the SOLAR PLEXUS area on both feet.



Thumb walk over the HEAD and BRAIN reflex areas. Also, make several passes over the BRAIN STEM area (see p. 85).

Anxiety & depression

Relaxation is important for these conditions. Work the SOLAR PLEXUS reflex area for relaxation, the PANCREAS reflex area to help stabilize blood sugar levels, and the ADRENAL GLAND reflex area to normalize adrenaline production.

Work the SOLAR PLEXUS reflex area by pinching the webbing of the hand. Repeat several times.



Apply the thumb walking technique repeatedly to the SOLAR PLEXUS area, using light pressure only.



Work the PANCREAS reflex area by using the thumb walking technique. Make several passes.



Finally, thumb walk through the ADRENAL GLAND area several times.

RESOURCES

Finding a reflexologist

You may want to hire a reflexology professional instead of, or in addition to, home-application of reflexology techniques. Check your practitioner's credentials for any qualifications and membership of organizations (*see below*). However, standards have changed over the past decade, so you should ask a prospective practitioner the date and duration of their study, and how much

professional experience they have. The best-qualified reflexologists have completed a course of study of 50 hours or more and also have at least a year's experience of practice. It is also worth noting that someone who has expanded into other areas (such as selling products or offering other complementary therapies) may not be as experienced in giving reflexology sessions as a specialist.

Contacts

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Foot Reflexology Awareness Association
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Mission Hills, CA 91346
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Iowa Association of Reflexologists
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Email: pbarrance@juno.com

Maine Council of Reflexologists
P. O. Box 5833
Augusta, ME 04330
www.reflexologyofmaine.org

New England Association of Reflexologists
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Nevada Reflexology Association
P. O. Box 27108
Las Vegas, NV 89126
Phone: 702-615-3332
www.nvreflexology.org

New York State Reflexology Association
142 E. 23rd St., Suite 4
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Phone: 212-477-2829
www.newyorkstatereflexology.org

North Carolina Reflexology Association
P. O. Box 6441
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Ohio Association of Reflexologists
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Pennsylvania Reflexology Association
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Reflexology Registration Council
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Email: icr@mountaincable.net
www.icr-reflexology.org

Ontario College of Reflexology
www.ocr.edu

Websites

www.reflexology-research.com
Kevin and Barbara Kunz's website
offering the basics on reflexology theory
and practice, complete with information
on developments in reflexology research.

www.foot-reflexologist.com
Kevin and Barbara Kunz's website
offering information and advice for
professional reflexologists.

www.myreflexologist.com
Offers interactive information on
reflexology products and practice.

www.reflexology.org
Features links to important reflexology
websites, as well as a list of worldwide
reflexology organizations.

www.iol.ie/~footman/booklst.html
Lists useful reflexology books, videos,
and charts, and where to purchase them.

www.foot.com
Information on how to take care of
your feet.

Further reading

Bayly, Doreen
Reflexology Today
(Inner Traditions Intl Ltd, 1989)

Gillanders, Ann
Reflexology: A Step-by-Step Guide
(Element Books, 1997)

Hall, Nicola
Reflexology: A Way to Better Health
(Newleaf, 2001)

Jora, Jurgen
*Foot Reflexology: A Visual Guide
for Self-Treatment*
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Kunz, Kevin and Barbara
My Reflexologist Says Feet Don't Lie
(Reflexology Research Project
Press, 2001)

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Hand Reflexology Workbook (Revised)
(Reflexology Research Project
Press, 1999)

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The Complete Guide to Foot Reflexology
(Reflexology Research Project
Press, 1993)

Kunz, Kevin and Barbara
*Hand and Foot Reflexology:
A Self-Help Guide*
(Simon & Schuster, 1992)

Advanced reading

Lett, Anne
*Reflex Zone Therapy for Health Care
Professionals*
(Churchill Livingstone, 2000)

Marquardt, Hanne
Reflex Zone Therapy of the Feet
(Inner Traditions Intl Ltd, 1996)

Eugster, Father Josef
*The Rwo Shur Health Method: A Self Study
Book on Foot Reflexology*
(Geraldine Co., 1988)