

Theory Exam #1 Study Packet

Condensed Notes

Chapter 3 – Tools of the Trade

- **Massage tables:** Standard size = 28–33" wide, 72–73" long; adjustable height protects therapist.
- **Fabric:** Polyurethane = durable, eco-friendly.
- **Care:** Avoid alcohol/citrus cleaners → crack fabric.
- **Linens:** Cotton/flannel; launder after every client; replace when stained/torn.
- **Lubricants:**
 - Lotions/Crèmes – absorb quickly, most popular.
 - Oils – good glide, stain linens.
 - Butters/Balms – very rich.
 - Gels – light/quick-absorbing.
- **Room setup:** Temp 70–75°F; soft lighting; music ~60 bpm; safety = clear walkways, non-slip floors.

Chapter 7 – Body Mechanics, Positioning, Draping

- **Body mechanics:** safe, energy-conserving, reduces injury.
- **Common injuries:** hands, wrists, shoulders, low back (70% therapists).
- **Foot stances:**
 - Archer stance (bow) → long gliding strokes.
 - Horse stance (warrior) → stability in front.
- **Core stability** = power source. Center of gravity = lower abdomen.
- **Positions:**
 - Prone – face down, support ankles/face.
 - Supine – face up, support neck & knees.
 - Side-lying – pillows at head, chest, knees.

- Semireclining – safe for pregnancy, pillow under hip.
- Seated – tripod = feet, buttocks, hands/elbows.
- **Draping:** modesty, privacy, warmth. Anchor sheet when turning.

Chapter 8 – Massage Techniques

- **Father of modern massage:** Pehr Henrik Ling.
- **Main Swedish techniques (E-P-F-C-T-V):**
 - **Effleurage** (gliding) → begin/end sessions, centripetal (toward heart).
 - **Petrissage** (kneading) → lift/squeeze tissue.
 - **Friction** → rubbing, transverse = cross-fiber.
 - **Compression** → press without gliding.
 - **Tapotement** (percussion): hacking, cupping, clapping, pounding, tapping, pincement.
 - **Vibration** → shaking/trembling (fine vs jostling).

Chapter 9 – Standard Precautions & Contraindications

- **Hand hygiene:** wash with soap & water, 20 seconds.
- **Sanitizers:** ≥60% alcohol (less effective on oily hands).
- **Transmission:**
 - Contact (most common).
 - Vehicle = food, water, air.
 - Vector = insects/animals.
- **Disinfecting:** 5 tbsp bleach per 1 gallon water.
- **Contraindications:**
 - **Absolute:** fever, contagious disease, systemic inflammation.
 - **Local:** avoid only area (rash, port, injury).
- **PPE:** disposable gloves most common.

Chapter 3 – Tools of the Trade

Fill-in-the-Blank Review

1. Standard massage table width is _____ to _____ inches.
2. The most eco-friendly and durable table fabric is _____.
3. Alcohol and citrus-based cleaners should be avoided because they _____.
4. The lubricant type most likely to stain linens is _____.
5. Massage room temperature should be kept between _____°F and _____°F.

Open-Ended Review Questions

1. Why is adjustable table height important for therapist safety and body mechanics?
2. What features should you look for when purchasing a massage table for both in-office and mobile use?
3. Describe how to properly disinfect and maintain your table and bolsters between clients.
4. Why is polyurethane considered a better alternative to PVC for table upholstery?
5. What are the potential risks of using alcohol-based cleaners on massage equipment?

6. Explain how temperature, lighting, and sound contribute to creating a therapeutic massage environment.
7. What are some professional practices for maintaining hygienic linens?
8. Why should lubricants never be left open or scooped with bare hands?

Chapter 7 – Body Mechanics, Positioning, Draping

Fill-in-the-Blank Review

6. About ____% of massage therapists report work-related musculoskeletal pain.
7. The _____ stance is best for long gliding strokes.
8. The _____ stance provides stability when working directly in front of the body.
9. The body's center of gravity is located in the _____.
10. A client with low back discomfort while supine should be supported with a _____.
11. Draping provides _____, _____, and _____.

Open-Ended Review Questions

1. Describe the difference between the archer (bow) stance and the horse stance. When would each be used?
2. What are common causes of injury among massage therapists, and how can they be prevented?

3. Explain how maintaining a neutral spine benefits both therapist and client.
4. What is the proper method for draping a client turning from prone to supine?
5. How should positioning be modified for clients who are pregnant or have spinal conditions?
6. What are early warning signs of poor body mechanics?
7. Why is awareness of your center of gravity crucial during massage work?
8. Describe how bolsters enhance both comfort and proper alignment.
9. How can grounding and breathwork improve a therapist's endurance during sessions?

Chapter 8 – Massage Techniques

Fill-in-the-Blank Review

12. The “Father of Modern Massage” is _____.

13. Effleurage is also called _____ or _____.
14. Petrissage involves _____, _____, and _____ of soft tissues.
15. Transverse friction is also called _____ friction.
16. Name three types of tapotement: _____, _____, _____.
17. Vibration has two main types: _____ and _____.

Open-Ended Review Questions

1. Compare the purposes and physiological effects of effleurage vs. petrissage.
2. Describe when and why you would use friction techniques.
3. What is the difference between fine vibration and jostling?
4. How do tapotement techniques influence the nervous system?
5. Why should effleurage generally move centripetally (toward the heart)?
6. What are the benefits of beginning and ending a session with effleurage?
7. How does pressure depth affect the body's response?

8. Describe the correct body mechanics for performing deep petrissage safely.
9. Explain the physiological effect of transverse friction on scar tissue or adhesions.
10. How might Swedish massage strokes be modified for a client with poor circulation?

Chapter 9 – Standard Precautions & Contraindications

Fill-in-the-Blank Review

18. The most effective infection control method is _____.
19. Proper hand washing should last at least _____ seconds.
20. The three main modes of disease transmission are _____, _____, and _____.
21. The correct bleach dilution for disinfecting is _____ tablespoons per gallon of water.
22. An example of an absolute contraindication is _____.
23. An example of a local contraindication is _____.
24. The most common PPE used in massage is _____.

Open-Ended Review Questions

1. Explain the difference between absolute and local contraindications. Give two examples of each.

2. Describe how pathogens are spread through contact, vehicle, and vector transmission.
3. When is it appropriate for a massage therapist to wear gloves?
4. How should contaminated linens be handled and stored?
5. Why is it important to wash hands before and after each client—even if gloves are worn?
6. How would you handle a situation where a client shows signs of contagious illness?
7. What are the most common workplace fomites in a massage room?
8. Explain how universal precautions protect both client and therapist.
9. What should be included in a therapist's daily cleaning routine?