

Home Maintenance and Self-Treatment Program/Handout

This document presents guidelines for a home maintenance and self-treatment program for patients after therapy at Clear Passage. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult a Clear Passage therapist or your physician for clarification. We prefer to help talk you through any issues with self-treatment, rather than have you do it incorrectly, unsuccessfully, or stop altogether.

Following Clear Passage therapy, we recommend:

- Setting aside 20 minutes a day, 5 to 7 days a week, for self-treatment.
- If you go 3 to 6 months without a setback in your condition or you are not finding any restrictions, you can decrease the frequency to 3 times a week.
- You can use any combination of techniques, tools, balls, foam roller or use of hands.
- You can divide it into several sessions during your day or do it all in one session. Find a time of day that is convenient to you.
- We suggest creating a routine and making it a part of your daily schedule.

If your medical condition changes, or if you experience a bowel obstruction, wait to resume self-treatment until you have obtained clearance from your physician and the soreness from the obstruction has resolved. If you think you are having a bowel obstruction, do NOT use the ball or tools. In this case, we recommend the compression technique (see below).

Principles of Self-treatment

- Treatment can be completed sitting or alternatively laying in a reclined position. Support your elbows and forearms with pillows to keep your neck and shoulders relaxed.
 - Gently and slowly, with relaxed hands, feel for areas in your abdomen that feel tight or are restricted.
 - Restrictions may feel hot, hard, tender or thicker. It may feel like “a good hurt” when gentle pressure is applied.
 - Slowly sink into the tissues, like sinking into wet clay, until you meet your body’s resistance. Take 15-30 seconds to do this. If you are using a lot of muscle power, you are working too hard. You can use your hands, a ball or one of the tools provided for you, whichever you prefer. More in depth instructions are found below.
 - Gently engage the restriction and move it in a clock or compass like direction and note which direction is the most restricted.

- Push or stretch the tissue INTO the direction that is the most resisted, feeling for an increase in tautness or further resistance. Maintain that hold until you feel the tissues begin to soften and change. It can feel like butter melting or taffy stretching. Stay with that line of tension as it releases and don't lose that tautness, continually and gently taking up the slack.
- Keep direct pressure for at least 2 minutes, working up to 10 minutes. Try to wait until you feel the softening and release before letting go.
- Always ease slowly out.
- It is better to do one or two longer holds rather than a lot of shorter ones.
- You should never feel more pain or soreness during self-treatment than you did when you were being treated by your therapist.
- These principles should also be followed if a family member is going to treat you.

Self-Treatment Techniques

Alternative Sitting Technique

- Sit on a chair and scoot your bottom towards the front edge of the chair.
- Find the area that is restricted, and then bend forward over your finger pads or tool.
- Your body weight becomes a source of pressure. You can apply direct, deep pressure, or stretch the tissues apart with your fingers, or finger and tool.
- You can also slowly straighten your body, letting that movement add to the stretch.



- Curl your fingers and place them together back-to-back.
- With your fingertips, press into an area that feels tight or restricted and sink in slowly.
- Staying at the appropriate depth, slowly stretch your fingers apart, and pay attention to the amount of restriction you feel between your fingers. You will likely only move a small distance, about 1 cm (less than half an inch).
- Next, stretch the tissues diagonally and assess the amount of restriction you feel between

your fingers. You can do this in different directions until you find the tightest direction.

- Hold the stretch for 2 -10 minutes or longer.
- During this time, you may notice the tissues begin to soften, melt, or stretch like taffy. When this occurs, follow the tissues and maintain the line of tension until you feel the tension release and soften, and your hand or hands get pulled to the next tension barrier.
- *Larry Wurn: "This process may resemble a very slow dance, where one hand starts to move before the other. One side may move a half an inch, and then the other side may begin to release. You may feel more things happen under one hand, and then the other. Just follow the tissues, waiting until the restrictions have softened and disappeared. If you don't feel a release or any changes, or if the spot you are working on feels like it is getting worse, then move your fingers to a different spot and try working there."*

Using a Massage Tool

- Hold the massage tool in one hand and slowly sink the tool into an area of restriction, using the tool as an anchor.
- Sink in slowly with the fingers or palm of your other hand, apply a directional stretch away from the tool into the direction that is the most resisted.
- Focus your attention on the stretch with your free hand rather than with the tool (which is the anchor). You may feel the tissues release, then stop again and release some more. Continue to apply pressure until you feel a release and there is no longer resistance to the stretch.
- Maintain the stretch for 2-10 minutes and release slowly.

Ball Protocol

- Gentle and slowly, with relaxed hands, feel for restricted areas in your abdomen.
- Lay down on a carpeted floor, on a yoga mat, or your bed and place a small inflatable ball or a softball directly on the restricted spot. Slowly roll or lower yourself onto the ball until an appropriate amount of contact has been made.
- Keep direct pressure for at least 2 minutes, working up to a maximum of 10 minutes.
- Allow yourself to soften over the ball, breathing gently throughout. When you feel as if the contact has softened, gently keep easing your body into the ball, maintaining the tension in the fascia. You may press up on your elbows to increase the pressure, or if lying on your side, bring your upper leg forward, rotating through your low back.
- If you are on a bed and feeling like you need more depth, you can place a book under the ball.

The Below Photos Are From Block Therapy



- If at any time you feel uncomfortable, your breathing becomes labored, or you feel like the discomfort is getting worse, ease your weight slowly off that spot or move the ball to another area nearby and see if that softens.
- Do NOT lie with the ball directly in the center of the abdomen, above your belly button.

If your medical condition changes, or if you experience a bowel obstruction, wait to resume self-treatment until you have obtained clearance from your physician and the soreness from the obstruction has resolved. If you think you are having a bowel obstruction, do NOT use the ball or tools. In this case, we recommend the compression technique (see below).

FOAM ROLLER

- Use a soft foam roller, a rolled-up yoga mat or towel, or pillows to create pivot points to engage your fascial system.
- Holds should be at least 2 minutes working up to 10 minutes.
- Picture in the exercise manual from the OPTP book as samples to be added.
- We recommend a soft foam roller like the OPTP soft. Please visit our Amazon store for links.
- Ensure your body is relaxed throughout these holds, using as many pillows as needed to create an appropriate stretch without pinching or straining any joints. If you find you feel any joint discomfort post stretching, perhaps the position was too extreme for that area at this time or you may have held the position for too long. Adjust accordingly and work into longer

and deeper holds, only when it is appropriate for you.

- The below are examples and suggestions, however move your body and find the directionality and positioning that feels appropriate for you today. Do not necessarily do the same holds every time.

This photo should have pillows under the head rather than holding up arms/head.



This pose should look more relaxed (top leg on pillow and upper arms relaxed).



You can also use a stretch strap (or belt/towel) or balls to assist with creating manual releases. Always use softer balls in the neck.



Small Bowel Obstruction Home Management

If you think you are beginning to obstruct, you must use your judgment and call your doctor or go to the hospital if needed.

Some things to try at home are:

- Most patients report some benefit by going on a clear liquid diet until their symptoms resolve.
- A moist heating pad (20 minutes on/off) to the abdomen or a warm bath for 20 minutes.
- Using relaxation or breathing techniques, meditation or mindfulness to relax your nervous system/ “relax your gut”.
- Move your body gently in ways that softly stretches the adhered area. Think of how a cat or dog stretches naturally, just doing what feels good in areas that feel tight.

Compression of the abdomen

<https://youtu.be/toNQedebF2g>

- This is the only self-treatment technique we recommend if you feel like you are obstructing. Do NOT use balls, tools or deeper abdominal releases at this time.
- Sit in a comfortable chair, bending forward.
- Place both hands onto either side of your abdomen.
- Slowly, taking 15-20 seconds to sink your hands into your abdomen, like they are sinking into wet clay.
- Bring your hands toward each other, gently ‘scooping’ the abdominal contents within them.



Compression Technique



- Hold the organs together for a minimum of 2 - 5 minutes. This allows your abdomen and intestines to relax if they are in spasm.
- An alternative method is to have a family member compress your abdomen whilst you are sitting semi-reclined or laying down.



- Always release your hold very slowly to avoid recurrence of spasm.
- With practice, you can often feel what areas are tight or hard. Allow your hands to sink in on either side of these areas and slowly compress them in, towards each other.
- Don't limit yourself to right/left or top/bottom planes. You can be site-specific to tight areas with diagonals, as long as you are gentle.
- When you feel the spasms have decreased or you are able to sink in easily, stop and take some time to relax or gently walk around the room or march on the spot.

Fertility patients

For patients who are actively trying to conceive, we recommend that during the luteal phase of your cycle (right after ovulation) you avoid any deep work around your uterus and reproductive structures. You will not cause any harm but let nature and your body do the work they are designed for. If your menstrual cycle starts you can recommence self-treatment. If you become pregnant, congratulations! Now you can focus on releasing tension in other areas of your body.

Need a phrase or sentence maybe about not giving up/staying consistent....

We also recommend stopping self-treatment right before starting any embryo implantation or IUI procedures.

This picture is off the internet, it is not ours.

https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&url=https%3A%2F%2Fnishaivf.com%2Fblog%2F-what-does-your-menstrual-cycle-say-about-your-fertility%2F&psig=AOvVaw3nj-O584Q-q777TG9K_IOX&ust=1727787132631000&source=images&cd=vfe&opi=89978449&ved=0CBQQjRxqFwoTCMid-suTa6ogDFQAAAAAdAAAAABAE

