

Daily Oil Massage

The purpose of Ayurvedic Daily Oil Massage as part of daily routine is to assist in preventing the accumulation of physiological imbalances and to lubricate and promote flexibility of the muscles, tissues, and joints. The classical texts of Ayurveda also indicate that daily oil massage promotes softness and luster of the skin as well as youthfulness. The following are some simple instructions to assist you in learning the Ayurvedic Daily Oil Massage.

1) Unless a specific oil has been recommended for you, then sesame oil should be used for daily massage. If you find sesame oil unsuitable in some way, you may try olive oil or coconut oil as alternatives. To purify the massage oil, 'cure' it by heating it to about 212 degree Fahrenheit (100 degree Celsius), the boiling point of water. Stir occasionally: By adding a drop of water to the oil, in the beginning, you will know that the proper temperature has been reached when the water boils. (You will hear a crackling or popping when this point is reached. Then remove the pan from the stove immediately before the oil begins to burn.) It is best to cure oil for each day's massage on a daily basis. As an alternative (to save time) you may cure more oil at a time. One liter of oil will cover about fifteen massages.

Note: Please be aware that sesame oil and other oils are flammable, for this reason they should be cured in the following way:

- Always heat oil on low heat, never on high heat.
- Oil should never be heated unattended.
- Once oil reaches the proper temperature it should be removed from heat and stored in a safe place to gradually cool.

**note that if you have purchased your daily massage oil from The Center for Optimal Health, curing is not necessary. The oils we carry have already been properly prepared and are ready for use.*

2) Before beginning the massage, the oil should be at or slightly above body temperature. (A simple way to warm up the oil is to place the bottle in hot water in your sink for several minutes.) Start by massaging the head. Place a small amount of oil on the fingertips and the palms and begin to massage the scalp. Use comfortably soft pressure for the massage. The massage for the head and for the entire body should be with the palm of the hands rather than with the fingertips alone. Since the head is said to be one of the most important parts to be emphasized during Ayurvedic Daily Oil Massage, spend proportionately more time on the head than you do on other parts of the body.

3) Next apply oil gently to your face and outer part of your ears. You do not need to apply much pressure to these areas.

4) Massage both the front and back of the neck, and the upper part of the spine. Continue to use the palms of your hands, in a rubbing type of motion.

5) You may want to now apply a small amount of oil to your entire body and then proceed with the massage to each area of the body. This will allow maximum amount of time for the oil to in contact with the body and get absorbed through the skin.

6) Next massage your arms. The proper motion is back and forth over your long bones, and circular over your joints. Massage both arms, including the hands and fingers.

7) Now apply the oil to the chest and abdomen. A very gentle circular motion should be also used, following the bowel pattern from the right to the right lower part of the abdomen, moving clockwise towards the left lower part of the abdomen.

8) Massage the back and spine. There will be some area which you may have difficulty reaching.

9) Massage the legs. Like the arms, use a back and forth motion over the long bones and circular over the joints.

10) Lastly, massage the soles of the feet. The feet also are considered especially important and proportionately more time should be spent here than other parts of the body. Use the palms of your hands and massage vigorously back and forth over the soles of the feet.

This completes the Ayurvedic Daily Oil Massage. Ideally, about 10 to 20 minutes should be spent each morning on the massage. However, if this time is not available on a particular day, it is better to do a very brief massage rather than to skip the massage altogether. Once you have added this Ayurvedic Daily Oil Massage to your daily routine, the benefits will make it quite natural for you to continue the massage on a permanent basis.