

Massage

Client health information

In Victoria there is currently no provision in the *Health Act 1958* requiring massage or muscle stimulation businesses to be registered by Local Government. This fact sheet has been produced to allow those considering these procedures to make an informed decision about the process.

Massage

Massage therapy is the manipulation of soft tissue for therapeutic purposes.

Massage may include the use of oils, powders, heat rubs, hot and cold packs and other recognised forms of massage therapy.

Before commencing a massage it is crucial that the massage therapist knows of any medical condition that you may have such as recent fractures, malignancies, varicose veins, infections, and areas of broken skin. Let the massage therapist know if you are pregnant. It is also important to let the massage therapist know of any allergies you may have.

Operator requirements

- The therapist's hands should be cleaned before and after the procedure.
- The work area should be clean and tidy.
- Paper towels, paper strips, pillowcases and towels should be changed between clients.
- Soiled linen, towels and protective clothing should be washed and laundered using hot water and detergent.

Electrical muscle stimulation

Electrical muscle stimulation (EMS) has a number of uses. It is used by health professionals to prevent, or reduce muscle atrophy. Atrophy is the weakening and loss of muscle bulk and tone, which is usually experienced after surgery or injuries. Health professionals also use it as a means of increasing blood flow to muscles, increasing range of movement, increasing muscle strength, and enhancing muscle endurance. It is also used for pain management in muscle related pain, such as spastic, sore, or tight muscles.

Recently, the fitness industry has promoted EMS for muscle toning results.

Electrical muscle stimulation uses an outside electrical source that stimulates the nerves to send signals to your muscle to relax and contract.

This is done by sending electrical currents through self-adhesive electrodes placed over the muscle.

There is a risk of infection if the electrodes become contaminated.

Operator requirements

- The electrodes should be cleaned with a cloth using warm water and detergent, rinsed and dried after each client use.
- After the electrodes have been cleaned of contaminants, the operator should disinfect the electrodes by wiping with a solution of 70% alcohol and drying them using a lint free cloth.

For further information contact your local council health department or the Communicable Disease Control Unit of the Department of Human Services on 1300 651 160.

www.health.vic.gov.au/ideas

July 2006