



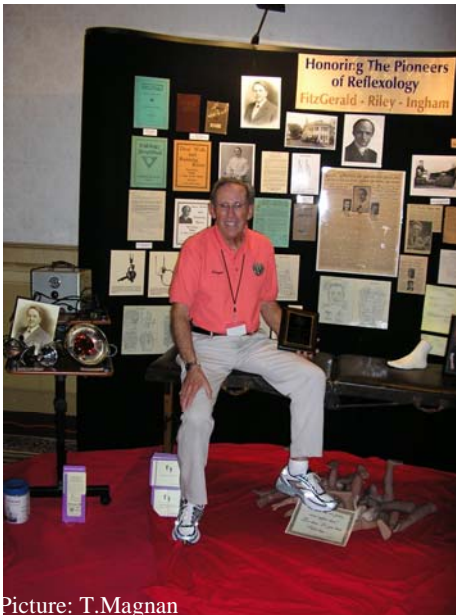
# NEWSLETTER

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E-mail: [myreflexologystore@cox.net](mailto:myreflexologystore@cox.net)  
Web: [www.myreflexologystore.com](http://www.myreflexologystore.com)  
Blog: <http://myreflexologystore.blogspot.com>  
TEL: 401-714-5722/401-568-6449

## What's happening in the Store!



Picture: T.Magnan

### The Answer is "Not Much!"

You know, it's been a month since the RAA Conference and I'm STILL excited! It was so nice to go, and particularly to meet many of the "Pioneers" of Reflexology, as well as people I've spoken with on the phone, or emailed, or know through the Kunz Forum. There were folks there from Israel, Japan, Australia and Canada.

The picture at the left is of Dwight Byers in front of the Exhibit honoring FitzGerald, Riley and Ingham. Two of Dr. FitzGerald's granddaughters were there as well!

Throw in some great workshops, food, raffles and networking.....  
A great time was had by all!

**The next RAA Conference in 2010 will be in Colorado.**

**Back to the Store** - Since the Conference, It's been busy and I've been busy! Trouble is that I've had several 'busy' projects ☺ The store has taken a back seat, but not for much longer. I actually have a few new products that I'm sure you'll enjoy. One is a DVD of the Universal Method of Reflexology, showing the various systems, by Teri Magnan, NBCR (my teacher). Another is a great wall chart done by Karen Ball - And - I will be offering foam wedges, which will provide support for your clients during a session. Stay tuned.....



## The Healing Power of Touch - Fibromyalgia

by, Linda Chollar

A number of specific therapeutic touch disciplines are being integrated with conventional treatments to meet the challenge of supporting the Fibromyalgia Community. Medical professionals are recognizing the importance of touch therapies as studies and clinical trials are showing the effectiveness of touch as an essential component of a holistic health model. Touch therapies can play an important role in a

multidisciplinary approach for managing pain, fatigue, depressed mood, sleep problems, gastrointestinal distress, poor concentration, restless leg syndrome, anxiety and headaches.

Touch therapies promote a "relaxation response" in patients, which allows for a state of deep rest that changes the physical and emotional responses to stress (e.g., decrease in heart rate, blood pressure and muscle tension). Bodywork disciplines that can have this effect on the body are massage therapy with lighter to medium pressure, aromatherapy massage such as The Raindrop Technique, Polarity Therapy, Cranio Sacral Balancing, energy therapies such as Reiki and Foot Reflexology. The "relaxation response" induced by the many forms of touch therapy is crucial in helping patients overcome chronic pain and the associated overlapping illness.

***Pain Management Beyond Medication*** While medications help patients cope with the devastating symptoms of fibromyalgia, touch therapy enables the body to heal and function. Researchers at the Touch Research Institute, University of Miami, have studied adults with fibromyalgia and the effects of massage therapy<sup>1</sup>. The results reported reduced anxiety and uplifted mood immediately after a massage session. Sleep quality improved and other fibromyalgia symptoms such as pain, stiffness and fatigue were relieved as well. Researchers say that massage therapy alters the sleep pattern, increases serotonin levels and reduces levels of the chemical messenger for pain.

Touch therapy practitioners who specialize in treating chronic pain clients agree that a multidisciplinary approach is essential to improve quality of life, lend emotional support, decrease pain and support conventional treatments. As we educate the fibromyalgia community and physicians that many complementary therapies have precisely this focus and expertise, we provide options and avenues for each individual to take an active role in their wellness.

***Foot Reflexology In Pain Management*** One specific therapy that is effective in promoting deep relaxation and relief of acute and chronic pain is Foot Reflexology, sometimes referred to as foot acupressure. Reflexology is a type of therapy applied to the feet, likened to massage but having a specific focus on systems of the body (organs and glands). The effects take place through the nervous system and clients often report feeling euphoric and deeply relaxed. One explanation for this is the release of the body's endorphins (the body's 'feel good' chemicals) that can occur with the techniques applied to the acupressure points and nerve reflexes in the feet. The effects of regular reflexology treatments can have profound results, many reporting overall improvements in health, a greater sense of well being and an increased awareness of their body.

As a provider of various touch therapies specializing in chronic pain conditions, Reflexology is the foundation for every therapy I provide because of its ability to relax the body and reduce pain. A program for pain management may include craniosacral therapy, polarity, essential oils and so on. However, as I tailor the treatment for each individual, the feet are the basic assessment tool and an efficient communicator to the rest of the body.

***How Does Reflexology Work?*** With the extensive nerve distribution in the feet, and the large portion of the sensory and motor area of the brain devoted to the feet, stimulation and therapeutic movement of the feet activates responses throughout the nervous system. The results are body-wide effects. Circulation is improved, lymphatic movement is enhanced and the body's natural pain relieving chemicals are triggered.

Neurologically, the activation of receptors in the feet changes the tempo and tone of the body by sending new messages into the system, which responds by becoming homeostatic (balanced). In essence, the foot becomes a conduit for sharing information throughout the body. Pressure applied to the feet generates a signal through the peripheral and central nervous system, then is relayed to the brain and on to the various organs to allocate the necessary adjustments in fuel and oxygen. Finally a response is sent to the motor

system and the body's overall tone and tension level is adjusted, reducing stress on the body's internal systems.

Dr. J. Manzanares, M.D., surgeon and reflexologist with 20 years of medical experience who has treated 70,000 clinical cases of reflexology patients, confirms this neurological circuit that takes place from the receptors in the feet<sup>2</sup>. There are over 7,000 nerve receptors in each foot and there is no other single part of the body that when massaged can affect the entire body like the feet. No wonder we love foot rubs!

***Trigger Points In The Feet*** The feet have tender points and trigger points just as the body does. With fibromyalgia patients, these points in the feet are significant and relevant to aches and pains elsewhere in the body. A Reflexologist assesses these tender areas in the same way that trigger points are addressed in the body. Identifying structural and mechanical factors in the feet or legs that contribute to these perpetuating trigger points is essential for the treatment of the chronic pain. One example is restless leg syndrome which can be caused by trigger points in the feet and calf muscles. Relieving these tender points can often alleviate this syndrome.

In addition to treating the body's 18 FM tender points, the feet need to be addressed. A 'fibromyalgia foot' is characterized by certain shape variants. The feet are good indicators of stress in the body. We've all heard it said, when the feet hurt, the body hurts. Unfortunately, many are unaware of the importance of the health of our feet and with fibromyalgia and chronic pain sufferers, they are of vital importance.

A reflexologist will address these points in the feet as part of tailoring a session for the individual. In a treatment, a health history is taken and specific concerns are discussed. The feet are assessed and the treatment proceeds to relax the overall body, internal organs and promote relaxation.

***Closing Thoughts*** The Electricity of Touch is the title of a report from the Institute of HearthMath that measured the cardiac energy exchange between individuals participating in certain healing techniques<sup>3</sup>. It presents a sampling of results which provide intriguing evidence that an exchange of electromagnetic energy is produced by the heart when touch or close contact occurs. One person's ECG signal registered in another person's EEG and elsewhere on their body. This study provides a solid, testable theory on the observed effects of caring touch and gives a plausible mechanism to explain how this energy from an individual can facilitate a healing process.

J. Madison Taylor, M.D., wrote in 1908: "No single therapeutic agent can be compared in efficiency with this familiar but perfect tool...The Human Hand. If half as much research had been expended on the principles governing manual treatment as upon pharmacology, the hand would be esteemed today on a par with drugs in acceptability and power."<sup>4</sup>

Science is confirming what we know in our hearts: intentional, caring touch is good medicine. It can create hope, ease the symptoms of disease and calm the body and soul.

***About the Author*** Linda Chollar, MTI, APP, CHT, is a board-certified Reflexologist, educator and director of Advanced Body Wellness, a center for healing therapies. She has spent the last twenty years in the holistic health field, treating private clients, researching and teaching at massage schools, hospitals, nursing schools, and health organizations about complementary therapies in an effort to bridge the gap between traditional and complementary medicine. Linda lectures nationally and is available for workshops and training classes for professionals and the general public. She is designing a program for fibromyalgia support groups to learn reflexology for self care and will soon be releasing a book on reflexology and chronic pain. Her office is located in the Los Angeles area and she can be reached at 310-318-3353 or E-mail: [linda@lindachollar.com](mailto:linda@lindachollar.com) (PS - Linda was at the Conference too!)



## Marketing Tip for your Personal Website

Most web sites give information about the practitioner, such as credentials, types of services, etc. While this information is essential, it focuses on the practitioner and not the client.

Take a look at the verbiage on your web site. Is it filled with references to "I", "me" and "we"? If it is, you should make some minor changes to gain client interest. They want to know what you are going to do for them.

Instead of using sentences such as, "I help clients by .....", try "Your session will have you floating blissfully out of the office". This puts the focus on the client and - gives them a great visual!

Try to keep it "All About Them" as much as possible and you'll see good results.

*Nancy Bartlett, NBCR*