

Reflexology

You are surely wondering: what does reflexology have to do with dentistry? Indeed, the connection between them is similar to the connection between reflexology and other fields of Western medicine. It complements them. What does this mean? How does it work? First of all, we must explain a few things about treatment using reflexology.

The word "reflexology" comes from the word "reflection." Reflexology sees the feet as a reflection of the other parts of the body which can be influenced. Using various techniques of touching the feet such as massage and pressure, a reflexologist can treat various ailments. Putting pressure on certain locations causes a chain reaction on nerve reflexes which causes the muscle tension to loosen, improves blood flow and generally calms the body.

Foot massage is not new to mankind. There are testimonies to the fact that many cultures used therapies which focused on the sole of the foot, which are similar to what we call "reflexology" today, starting with the ancient Egypt and China, and leading up to 18th century Germany. At some point, reflexology disappeared from the world of healing and returned again only at the beginning of the 20th century, when an American ear, nose and throat specialist named Dr. William Fitzgerald revealed that touching and placing pressure on certain areas of the foot accelerates the recuperation process and eases pain focused even in locations far from the foot. Fitzgerald named his method of treatment "zone therapy" and thus laid the foundations for modern reflexology.

Reflexology is a method of diagnosis and treatment which is non-invasive and has been researched and proven to assist treatments performed in various situations of illness, beginning with stress and fatigue and including situations of chronic diseases and even acute diseases. Reflexology is a holistic medical approach, aimed at healing the specific as part of the whole unit, in order to bring the person to a state of balance and harmony between his body and soul. Why is this state of balance so crucial? Because the body's self-healing mechanism works better when it is balanced.

Reflexology is based on the understanding that on the sole of the foot, all of the limbs, glands, and different body parts are reflected. The feet are very sensitive because of the presence of many nerve endings which transfer electronic impulses and serve as energy channels connecting the soles of the feet to the rest of the body. Controlled pressure placed on the various pressure points on the soles of the feet activate nerve impulses which send a message that is transferred by nerve cells to the two nervous systems in our bodies – the peripheral and central (spinal cord and brain), and these transfer to the specific limb which we want to influence.

In the context of dentistry, reflexology is a proven treatment tool which helps to lessen and eliminate stress and fear common in patients of dental clinics. This situation of imbalance causes the muscles to contract. When the muscles are contracted, the blood flow in the body is not as good, the natural pain relievers that are present in our blood have a harder time reaching the various body parts and the pain sensation is increased. Reflexology strengthens the blood flow and helps relax the muscles, thus helping the natural pain relievers reach the various body parts, as well as the nutritional elements and oxygen which the body needs in order to function properly- helping the body heal itself.

The treatment begins by meeting the reflexologist and receiving an explanation about the essence of the treatment. After an initial relaxation treatment is performed, the dentist begins the dental procedures. As the procedure takes place, treatment is performed on the various body systems, such as the nervous system, blood flow, lymphatic system, hormonal system and others, to bring the body to a state of balance which will assist in enlisting the help of the internal healing system to reinforce the external efforts made by the dentist. The reflexology treatment continues throughout the entire procedure while paying attention to the needs of the patient at the various stages of the procedure.

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