

THE FREE SHIATSU REPORT

Learn how Shiatsu can change your life!



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Introduction: How Shiatsu Can Change Your Life

Shiatsu has many health benefits. It is a “holistic” way of healing and calming the mind and body. And by “holistic,” we mean it doesn’t merely work to cure the ailment of a specific body part, but to provide an overall pleasant sense of well-being experienced by the body as a whole.

In this free Shiatsu report, you’ll learn how a reputable, highly trained Shiatsu practitioner can use their hands (thumbs, palms, fingers), and sometimes knees and elbows to optimum effect in achieving the desired healing result.

Shiatsu can heal. But as wise people say: an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure. That’s why Shiatsu is perfect: you can also use it as a regular preventive maintenance therapy to protect yourself from stress-related illnesses. Depression, constipation, digestive problems, muscle aches, mental and emotional stress—all these and more can be improved or managed through regular Shiatsu sessions.

Read the free Shiatsu report to see how this special Japanese method of holistic healing can help restore your health and increase your energy levels. At the very least, a nice trip to a good Shiatsu clinic can give you your much-needed quality time to pamper yourself, and in the best case could transform your quality of life.

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Shiatsu: Your Long-term Partner in Well-being

What is Shiatsu?

Quite simply, the term “Shiatsu” can be roughly translated as “finger pressure.” It is a Japanese system of alternative healing that involves a systematic way of applying pressure to the body’s meridians and acupressure points to achieve or restore well-being. However, the terms “finger pressure” may be slightly misleading, as Shiatsu actually relies not only on the fingers, but also on the highly trained use of the palms and thumbs, and sometimes, the knees, feet and elbows as well.

Shiatsu is also not all about massage—a significant part of a Shiatsu session is the accurate diagnosis of the patient’s body’s disharmonies, and how such disharmonies can be fully corrected.

However, although Shiatsu is known as a Japanese invention, it nevertheless relies on the age-old principles of Chinese traditional medicine—after all, China has had a long, deeply rooted cultural influence on Japan. But while it is undeniable that Shiatsu firmly stands on the shoulders of thousands of years of Chinese medicinal tradition, it nevertheless began developing into its modern form in the 20th century.



The History of Shiatsu

When it comes to traditional Chinese healing methods, it is impossible to accurately put a date or a location regarding origins. After all, massage, the use of certain herbs, and other devices meant to manipulate the body's energy ('Chi' or 'Qi') for the purpose of healing and attainment of well-being have been at the core of Chinese medicine for hundreds, or perhaps, thousands of years.

It is the same with Shiatsu. A Buddhist monk arriving in Japan in the 6th century has been widely credited as the one who brought traditional Chinese medicine to the country. Subsequently, whatever that monk had started, the local Japanese healers merely developed and adapted to the country's local temperaments, physical characteristics, and needs.

Shiatsu as we now know it only began in the 20th century, mainly through the contributions of notable innovators such as Tokujiro Namikoshi, Tamai Tempaku and Shizuto Masunaga. These innovators effectively incorporated what were then new scientific discoveries about the human anatomy and physiology into some of the major healing principles of ancient Chinese medicine. The result: a distinctly new alternative holistic healing therapy called Shiatsu.

By 1950, Shiatsu reached the USA through the efforts of Toshiko Phipps. By 1964, Shiatsu gained enough clout that the Japanese government officially recognized it as a distinct form of healing. In the 1970s, Shiatsu—in its different styles—continued to spread throughout Europe and America, becoming more and more popular among health buffs.

How Shiatsu works

Ancient traditional Chinese beliefs regarding human health hold that the mind and body are not mutually exclusive things. That's why when your mind is troubled—especially for a long time—physical disease or pain arises. What first existed in the mind can eventually become a physical problem. One effective way to calm the mind, and therefore heal the body, is through the manipulation or strategic massage of the acupressure points that exist throughout the body.

Practitioners of alternative medicine have a detailed map of these acupressure points, and how each point is linked to a specific organ or tissue. By moving or dispersing the 'stagnant' or 'stuck' energy affecting certain acupressure points (such as through acupuncture) or by massaging these same points (such as through Shiatsu), internal and external harmony are re-established and pain or illness disappears.

The role of Shiatsu, therefore, is to help neutralise these 'bad' energies by the strategic application of pressure that calms the central nervous system. With the mind at ease, so is the body.

Another way of looking at this situation of internal harmony is in terms of excess and deficiency: There will always be two meridians present in a disharmony of the body, an excessive, full or 'Jitsu' meridian and a deficient, empty or 'Kyo' meridian. A diagnosis of the meridian energy is taken on the arm, abdomen or sometimes on the back, this tells the Shiatsu practitioner which meridians need to be worked and in what ways. The Jitsu is dispersed and the Kyo is tonified throughout the body to balance and harmonise the energy in the meridians.

Essentially the energy is balanced and is released to do the healing, the therapist just facilitates the healthy flow of energy in the body.



What Shiatsu treats

Most commonly, Shiatsu is used to remove stress, induce deep relaxation, and provide a pleasant relief from muscle pain (especially that of the back, neck, and shoulders) and arthritis.

It can also bring relief to a number of psychological conditions, such as anxiety, insomnia, and depression.

Shiatsu is also effective in enhancing one's digestion, including a host of other related disorders such as constipation.

Overall, if you want to have the time and space to relax and regain your focus, the most pleasant way may be to book a session with a local Shiatsu therapist.

The Benefits of Shiatsu

As mentioned previously, Shiatsu has that uncanny ability to calm the mind and deeply relax the body. By keeping stress away, Shiatsu also has a preventive power against illness — many modern diseases, after all, arise from the constant presence of stress.

In fact, Shiatsu's therapeutic health benefits have been so well recognized that in Japan, large companies or corporations provide it free of charge to their employees—the free Shiatsu preventive sessions have been shown to increase productivity and efficiency.

Other benefits of Shiatsu include: reducing muscle and joint pain, relieving headaches, period pain and cramps, reducing the effects of and recovering from jetlag more quickly, improving sleep quality and energy levels, calming stress induced conditions such as IBS and digestive issues, reducing back pain, helping eye strain and tension headaches, improving flexibility and mobility, speeding recovery from illness and injury, reducing the chances of sports injuries, giving sufferers of eating disorders and body-dysmorphic disorder a positive experience of their bodies, reduced symptoms of MS, as well as reducing physical discomfort of pregnancy and also in aiding child birth...

And of course many more conditions can be eased or managed through regular Shiatsu treatments.



When NOT to use Shiatsu

Despite the essentially benign nature of Shiatsu as a healing therapy, there are still instances when performing it on a patient may not be advisable. As it is a touch-based therapy, the most obvious cases are those people with infectious skin conditions or open wounds, or those with existing bruises, tumors, cysts, abdominal hernia, or fractures.

Performing Shiatsu, or any type of massage, is also done with extreme caution on pregnant women because there are areas in the woman's body that should not be manipulated or worked on during pregnancy. If you are pregnant it is best to speak to your Shiatsu therapist in advance to ensure they are confident and comfortable giving a Shiatsu treatment during pregnancy. There are training modules dealing specifically with Shiatsu during pregnancy,

While Shiatsu generally induces deep relaxation, it is still not advisable to those who have just had surgery, or immediately after a chemotherapy session. Moreover, it is also not advised to those who have a medical history of being prone to blood clots.

As always, if you have any doubt, it's best to consult your GP first.

How to make the most out of your Shiatsu session

If you're visiting the clinic of a Shiatsu practitioner for the first time, it is generally best to arrive at the clinic at least 10-15 minutes before your appointment, so you can be relaxed and ready at the start of the session and you may be required to fill out forms about your general state of health and medical history. Your Shiatsu practitioner will surely tell you in advance of your first session that you should wear comfortable clothing that does not restrict your movement, so something such as a tracksuit or stretchy clothing is ideal. Clothing such as jeans or items made from thick and restrictive materials or with a lot of decorative elements are not suitable. Also, keep your pre-Shiatsu meal light for easy digestion. Bringing a pair of socks is often a wise choice as your feet may get cold during the session.

What to expect from your first Shiatsu session

As with every Shiatsu session, every Shiatsu practitioner is also different, so what you can expect from your first Shiatsu session will vary.

Suffice to say that you will be fully clothed, and most likely the treatment will be carried out on a traditional Shiatsu futon, a thin mattress made from cotton and natural fibers. Lately more Shiatsu practitioners have started to use a standard massage couch as it allows for greater flexibility and is also kinder on the therapists knees. When you have tried both styles you will be able to decide which you prefer, if indeed you notice any significant differences at all.

More recently I have heard reports of Brazilian Shiatsu, (presumably because there is a large Japanese population in Brazil) where the treatment is much more Brazilian in style, so expect to be wearing much less and for oils to be involved. I haven't had any personal experience of Brazilian Shiatsu so don't know if it is closely related to more traditional Shiatsu styles or whether it has just borrowed the name.

Differences in Shiatsu styles

Although all Shiatsu is based on the same principles and base techniques, styles may differ significantly between therapists that have trained at different schools or even therapists that have trained at the same school but choose to focus on specific techniques and applications of Shiatsu. If you are new to Shiatsu this may be confusing at first, but if you have the opportunity to try a variety of treatments you will begin to notice the thread that connects the styles. If at first you don't feel the treatment has worked for you then you may want to persevere or try a different therapist or school of Shiatsu.

The main differences in the schools are between Namikoshi Shiatsu and Masunaga Shiatsu. Namikoshi was the originator of Shiatsu but in the West the most popular style is 'Zen Shiatsu' or Masunaga style Shiatsu.

Namikoshi Shiatsu is more similar in approach to acupressure or acupuncture, working a sequence of pressure points that relate to a specific condition or symptom, while Masunaga Shiatsu is more focused on treating the whole meridian as it flows throughout the body and in turn the whole person. Both are equally effective but have a different focus.

Other styles that have come out of Zen Shiatsu are Movement Shiatsu and Ohashi Shiatsu, among others.

Personally I practice Masunaga or Zen Shiatsu, but I have also had a lot of experience treating in a Namikoshi style. I have a passing knowledge of Ohashi Shiatsu and very little knowledge of Movement Shiatsu, which seems to be rather obscure even in the age of the internet.

Perhaps I will explore these other styles more in future editions of this report, please write to the email address below if you have a specific interest in a particular style.

How your Shiatsu session may differ from treatment to treatment

Without going into the details of the meridian system too much, depending on your diagnosis on any given day and the types of symptoms you are suffering from, no two treatments will necessarily be alike. For example if one of the meridians the therapist wants to treat is the gall bladder meridian you may be treated lying on your side. However if another session the therapist needs to treat your bladder meridian, you may find you are lying on your stomach with the therapist working on your back. Humans are creatures of habit and our meridian diagnosis will also tend towards certain patterns, so over time you may notice similarities in your treatments and maybe even begin to notice a link between how you feel and the type of treatment you receive.

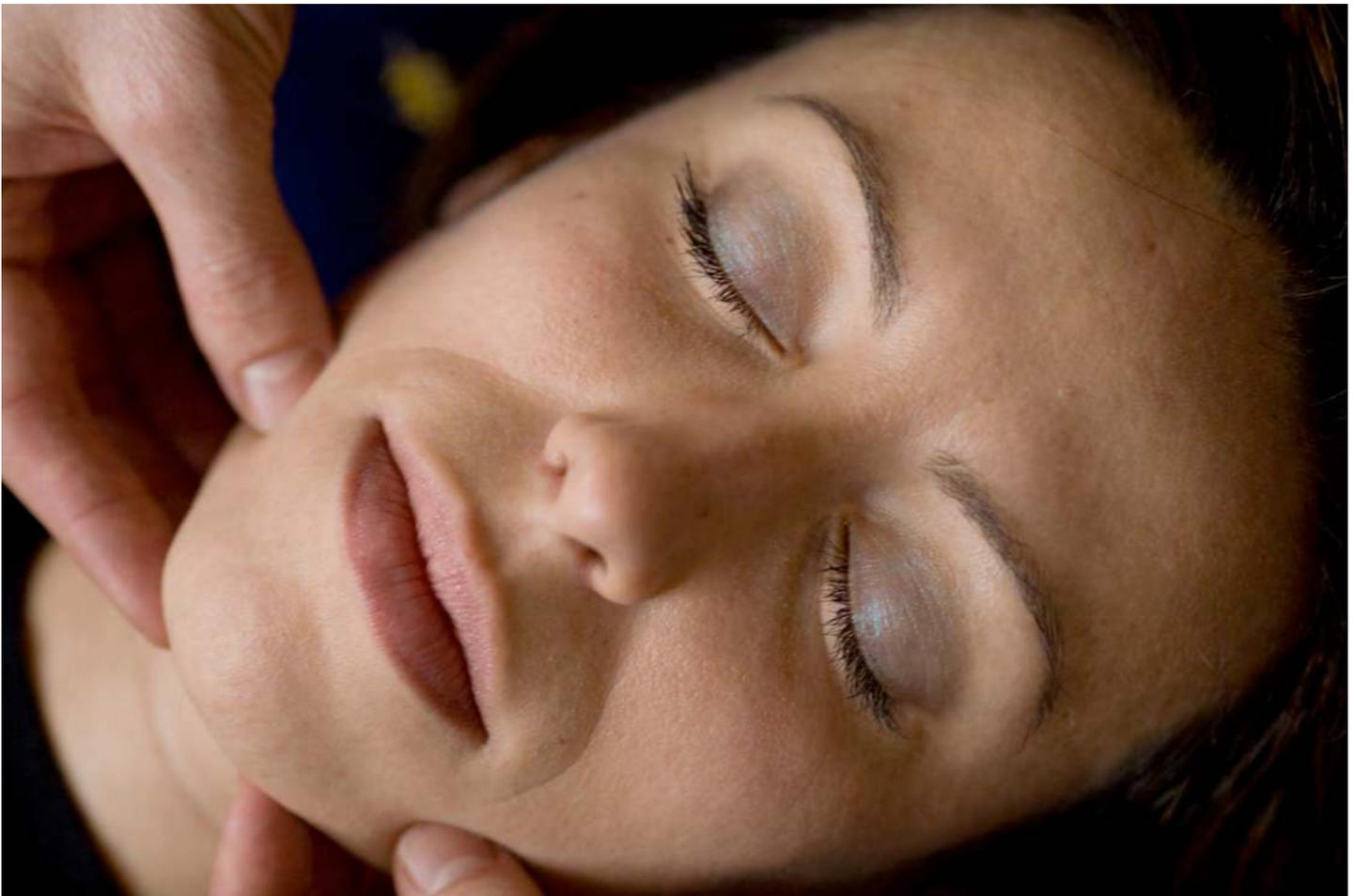
Research into Shiatsu

Naturally with Shiatsu being a complementary therapy there can be some skepticism from the mainstream media and allopathic medical community. In order to combat this and to show Shiatsu in the high standing that it deserves, various governing bodies throughout Europe and the UK have been undertaking research into why and how Shiatsu works, this research is actively being made available to the public. There is too much research to include here however a link to research findings is provided below.

“The Shiatsu Society has been engaged in research to support and promote an evidence base for its use. By research, we mean tasks that allow us to measure and explore why and how shiatsu works, for whom, for how long. The purpose is to gather findings that may help us further or modify our practice, to answer unanswered questions, and to present these to the wider health and social care community.”

The Shiatsu Society UK

<http://www.shiatusociety.org/resources/current-published-research>



About the Author

Hi, my name is Simon Henderson, I am the Shiatsu Guy, a Shiatsu therapist living and giving treatments in London, UK. I studied at the London College of Shiatsu, qualifying in 2008. Since then I have been active in promoting Shiatsu wherever possible to anyone interested :o)

I hope you have enjoyed reading this Shiatsu Report, if you would like to experience Shiatsu for yourself I recommend you contact a local Shiatsu therapist, a local Shiatsu College for student clinic or search the directory of your regional Shiatsu association for graduates.

If you live in London, I would be honoured if you consider a treatment from me.

For more information on my Shiatsu treatments and clinics you can visit www.theshiatsuguy.com or email info@theshiatsuguy.com



I'm happy to receive any feedback or suggestions on this report as I intend to keep developing and building on it in the future, so please also send your emails to the address above.

To Your Radiant Health!
Simon Henderson, The Shiatsu Guy