

ABHYANGA MASSAGE

Oiling the body is one of the most nourishing practices that Ayurveda touts as one that offers strength, longevity and pacification to the body and mind. Be sure to do abhyanga in a warm place and avoid any cold drafts or being chilled afterward.

1. Use 1 to 1.5 cups of Ayurvedic oil and transfer to a glass bottle or oil warmer to warm the oil. Use a large towel or sheet over the area you will be doing Abhyanga.
2. Without being in a hurry, lovingly and patiently massage the oil into your entire body for about 15 to 25 minutes, beginning at the extremities and working toward the middle of the body.
3. The general flow of massage goes from the head to the feet. Then move up the legs to the hips. Rub the abdomen and breast/chest area. Process down the arms and finish from sacrum to the whole back.
4. Optional is to start by applying oil on the scalp. Finger tips rubbing vigorously (can do a friction rub without oil as well). Oil applied to the head should be warm but not hot.
5. Next begin at the soles of your feet massaging and oiling feet and working up the legs to the whole body. Massage the soles, tops and toes of the feet. Circular at the ankles. Process up the shin long strokes 7 times with greater force of the upward stroke. circular at the knee.
6. Progress up the thigh long strokes per area of the thigh and roll onto the side and circular strokes in both directions at the hip joint.
7. Once the legs are done. Rub oil on the lower back in up and down and circular at the sacrum. Massage from base of pelvis into the sacrum.
8. To massage the chest you can lay down and pour oil down the chest from the throat the pubic bone. rub in circular fashion at the belly, breasts and shoulder area. Include the sides of the torso in long strokes.
9. Finish with long strokes down the arms from the shoulder down.
10. Sometimes it is best to apply base of oil to the entire body and add more as you re-visit each body part and massage with long strokes.
11. Use long strokes on the limbs and circular strokes on the joints. Massage the abdomen and chest in broad, clockwise, circular motions. Long strokes are done up toward the heart.
12. Massage face and neck.
13. After you've massaged your entire body, enjoy a warm bath or shower. Be sure to wash your feet off before entering the shower. You may allow the oil to stay on the body for up to 2 hours. However not much longer than that.
14. When you get out of the shower, towel dry by patting yourself dry instead of rubbing. And for an amazing finish you can apply sandalwood powder to bring luster to the skin. Enjoy a warm bath with epsom salts. It is best to sweat while oil is on the skin. Do not wipe oil off.

