

Roll it Out: Promote Wellness with Rollers

by Allison Hartigan



Incorporating self-care exercises into your daily routine is a must if you seek a long-term career practicing massage therapy. If you aren't doing enough to nurture yourself on a daily basis, then the foot roller may be the ideal self-care solution you seek, as it can easily be incorporated into a massage therapist's on-the-go lifestyle.

"It's user-friendly, safe and inexpensive—the three points I look for in a home-care product," explains Judith DeLany, founder and director of NMT Center in St. Petersburg, Florida.

DeLany has been using a foot roller since the early 90s and believes this versatile tool promotes self-care and enhances massage sessions.

How it works

The roller is designed to stimulate nerve endings on the bottom of the foot—otherwise known as acupressure points—and trigger relief for sore, tired feet. Regular use can help improve mobility, decrease fatigue and increase circulation, which in turn benefits the entire body and strengthens one's overall well-being. Other therapeutic benefits include relaxation and stress relief.

DeLany recommends using the roller if you spend a lot of time on your feet—as many massage therapists do—or if you're seeking relief for foot pain associated with common conditions, such as plantar fasciitis, heel spurs and overactivity.

Choosing a roller

Look for a roller with a hollow core. This feature helps match the foot's contour and creates a snug, custom feel. Traditional wooden rollers will work, but some people find them too hard and difficult to grip. Instead, look for a more durable material, such as natural rubber, which is slip resistant, won't scratch floors and can be easily cleaned with a disinfectant spray.

"I used a wooden roller for years, but I was recently given one made of rubber," says DeLany. "I like it because the rubber provides a slight give when rolling, making it more comfortable ... especially for a foot that already aches."

Certain brands of foot rollers can be chilled or frozen and used for cold therapy, a technique that helps reduce inflammation. Purchasing one of these types of foot rollers will enhance your usage, so you get more for your money.

Incorporating the roller into your practice

Rollers are also a great way to add value to your massage sessions; you can use them on clients during sessions to give your hands a break. This helps prevent burnout and provides an enjoyable add-on service for clients.

Foot rollers also make great resale items. DeLany encourages clients to use this tool as part of an at-home self-care program to complement their massage sessions.

Don't let its simple design fool you. The foot roller is a little tool that offers big results.

Benefits of use


The most appealing feature of the foot roller is its easy to use. It has no batteries or complicated electronics, and it doesn't have to be plugged in. You can use it while you watch TV, read the newspaper or talk on the phone.

"My favorite thing is its portability," says DeLany. "It fits in my purse, desk drawer or briefcase."

When you have a few minutes in between appointments or during your lunch break, you can slip off your shoes and give yourself a quick, energizing foot massage. And because of its size and shape, many therapists are coming up with alternative uses for this versatile tool.

"If you use your hands a lot, try rolling the palms as well as the forearm muscles," DeLany says. "The hands and forearms are a massage therapist's tools of the trade, yet they're often neglected in self-care. With the roller, you could develop a once- or twice-a-day routine for feet, palms and both flexor and extensor sides of the forearms."

DeLany stresses that with any tool, overenthusiastic use will have the same result as too much pressure from hands. Avoid excessive pressure as well as boney ridges and protuberances, such as the blade of the ulna and the styloid processes of the ulna and radius.

The foot roller is like five massage tools in one—all for about \$20. Now there's no excuse to skimp on self-care, because foot massage is one daily indulgence everyone can afford. 

Thera-Band® Foot Roller An Effective Solution for You and Your Clients



Hygienic Corporation/Performance Health introduced its new Thera-Band Foot Roller at the 2009 Florida State Massage Therapy Association (FSMTA) Annual Convention. This new product, with its application for self-care and as a general bodywork product, received rave reviews by those in attendance at the show.

The Foot Roller was initially developed for individuals seeking an affordable and effective solution for relieving foot pain caused by such common conditions as plantar fasciitis and heel spurs. However, in the hands of a massage therapist, the Thera-Band Foot Roller also becomes an ideal tool for relieving tension and stimulating circulation in other areas of the body.

Jeff Mathers, product manager for Hygienic Corporation/Performance Health, demonstrated the Foot Roller to those in attendance at the FSMTA convention. "We were very pleased with the buzz created at the show and by the number of therapists who started using it for self-care on their forearms," said Mathers. "Sold with a Biofreeze® Pain Relieving Gel sample, the Foot Roller becomes a great solution for relieving pain and tension in many areas of the body."

The Thera-Band Foot Roller features supple natural rubber, a ridged design and a hollow core. Because it can be chilled or frozen, the Foot Roller provides cold therapy to help reduce inflammation. Retail packaged and complete with usage instructions, the Thera-Band Foot Roller provides temporary relief from pain associated with plantar fasciitis or excessive activity. Clients and therapists experiencing such pain will find the massaging benefits of the roller pleasant and therapeutic.

Backed by the trusted Thera-Band name, therapists are assured of the Foot Roller's quality and benefits, and they can confidently dispense the product to benefit clients while building practice revenues.

For more information about this new product or any other Thera-Band product, visit www.Thera-Band.com or call (800) 321-2135.