

“Pet” Therapy

What is the definition of massage?

The manipulation of the soft tissues/muscles and connective tissue using various techniques to enhance function, aid in the healing process and promote relaxation.

Welcome to “pet” therapy where you will learn the strokes and techniques to massage your dogs properly and more beneficially. Massage is a wonderful way to bond with your four legged friend.

Unfortunately they don't spend enough time on this earth, so let's do all we can while we are blessed enough to have them with us!

Benefits of canine massage:

- Increase circulation/blood flow
- Improve muscle flexibility and strength
- Ease muscle aches
- Improve range of motion (ROM)
- Bond with your dog
- Ease arthritic pain
- Promote healthy skin and coat

Any, and all, dogs can benefit– from a performance dog to a family pet. Small dogs may not take as long to massage as a big dogs, but can benefit just the same. Massage, in addition with proper diet and exercise, will help give them flexibility and strength to live a healthier life.

Bony landmarks:

- Occipital bone - head
- Cervical -neck
- Thoracic -mid back
- Lumbar -low back
- Sacral -tailbone
- Caudal -tail
- Scapula -shoulder
- Ulna/Radius -foreleg
- Sternum -chest
- Ribs -belly
- Femur -hind leg
- Patella -knee

Various types of massage strokes:

- Compression -palm of hand in a pressing or squishing motion
- Percussion -tapping or thumping with loose fist or fingers
(natures Novocain)
- Kneading/Petrissage - one hand is pushing the skin into the other hand
- Effleurage -long strokes to warm the muscles
- Skin Rolling -grasping the skin using fingers to walk along the body
- Cross FiberFriction-to break up a knotted or tight area rubbing across the muscle fibers
- Chucking -scooting with fingers
- Wringing -use on legs twisting motion of the skin
- PressurePoint -use finger to hold an area for 10 seconds increase hold each time (effective in congested tissue areas)
- Vibration -gently vibrate using fingers along spine
- Friction/Circles -make tiny circles with thumb or fingers
- Spider Walk -finger walking
- Palpation - light pressure pumping action
- Sun n Moon - one hand massages asother hand moves around it
- The Wave -palm on belly gently press from palm to fingers

Areas to avoid:

Kidneys never use percussion like tapping or thumping in this area

Grab your furry friend and let's begin!

Use a quiet area with low lights and relaxing music. This setting is good, not only for the dog, but also for the person giving the massage to put them in a calming state of mind. Remove rings or bracelets. Massage with dog on a massage table, doggie bed (on floor or on couch) or with small dogs in lap.

You may want to have treats near you, in case your dog is hesitant at first about getting massaged. You want to make this a pleasant experience.

Ask dog, "Are you ready for your massage?"

Opening - place hands on dog, one at top of dog's head and the other at the tail

Top line/back

- Effleurage down spine and body
- Compressions on body
- Inching down spine 3x
- Skin rolling down spine 3x
- Stretch from hip to shoulder
- Vibration from neck to tail

Head and neck

- Warm tissue using one handed kneading on neck
- Spider walk all around neck area
- Inching on neck
- Chin lift a stretch and chin strokes
- Finger circles around eyes
- Finger circles around ears
- Pressure point massage on sides of neck
- Find spot hold for upto 15 seconds repeat 3x
- Finish with tapping around neck and gentle effleurage

Chest and shoulder

- Fist or palm compressions on chest and shoulder area
- One handed kneading on chest
- Chin lift and stroke down throat
- Finger circles around shoulder blade to chest 3x
- Find bony landmark top of shoulder blade:

feel for the muscle fiber on the bone use cross fiber friction and hold for trigger point release. 15sec 3x

- Inch around the entire shoulder blade
- Compressions on deltoid muscle
- Loose fist percussions
- Effleurage starting at neck down leg

Leg

- Check ROM
- Warm muscles with wringing 3x down leg
- Inching around elbow and under shoulder blade
- Finger strokes down leg to wrist
- Twist wrist back n forth
- Place thumb in paw pad massage between toes
- Recheck ROM

Ribs and stomach

- Kneading on belly
- Rake up from ribs 3x
- Inching between ribs
- Sun n moon on belly
- The wave
- Percussion light fists on ribs **neverover kidney area**
- Effleurage area to hips

Hips

- Check ROM
- Compressions over hip area 3x
- Thumb strokes around hip bone
- Locate pressure points hold for 15 sec 3x
- Compressions on inside of leg
- Inching front of leg and back
- Cross fiber friction on tight areas
- Chucking down leg
- Place thumb in paw pad massage between toes
- Recheck ROM

Repeat on other side

Closing

Effleurage down spine to tail
Finish with vibrations down spine to tip of tail

Lastly, before your dog engages in any strenuous activities it is a good idea to warm up their muscles to help reduce injuries. Try these 7 stretching techniques:

Stand on back feet and front feet
Turn the neck left and the whole body
Rock n roll frisk rocking down back and skin rolling
Effleurage quickly
Turn the neck to right and the whole body
Compressions on shoulders and hips
Hamstrings make dog walk backwards 3x

Thank you for choosing and using the “Pet” therapy massage video.
Valerie, Iggy and Sydney

P.S. Your dog thanks you too!!