Preface

Pre- and Perinatal Massage Therapy is a comprehensive guidebook to massage therapy for pregnant, laboring, and postpartum women. It provides a concise theoretical and practical foundation for massage therapists, and it equips them to safely weave appropriate therapeutic touch into modern maternity healthcare. It documents the benefits of massage and describes the relevant anatomical, physiological, emotional, and functional changes of the childbearing year. Featuring well-researched guidelines, it will prepare massage therapists to work cooperatively with others in the perinatal healthcare professions. Contributions to this book of many experienced massage therapists add a community perspective of this specialty area, unparalleled in other texts of its kind. Many maternity-specific massage and bodywork techniques are included in this book and are fully explained and illustrated. Marketing, ethical, and other business-related considerations, accompanied by a variety of profiles of successful pre- and perinatal massage therapists, bring it all into practice.

Course Applicability

I have written this book most specifically to inform and inspire advanced students in diversified curriculums that include both Western-originated and Asian-originated massage therapies. It is well suited for courses addressing special populations, from introductory modules to longer electives. Instructors and practitioners in continuing education seminars offering specialization and certification in maternity massage therapy will find concise, thorough, and practical depth and breadth. Individual practitioners can easily learn independently from its many features.

Spa managers, healthcare administrators, and mental health professionals seeking to create more well-rounded services for expectant women will find practical, reliable input. This book is also intended to provide doulas, midwives, nurse-midwives, obstetrical nurses, physicians, perinatal physical therapists, and childbirth educators the background to responsibly include skilled therapeutic touch as adjunctive patient care.

Practical and Humanistic Goals

The work in this book supports practitioners’ educational and business goals. It also has the potential to positively change individual women and their families. It can begin to knit an ever-widening fabric of nurturing touch into communities and throughout our world, helping unite and transform our all-too-often violent, touch-aversive societies. It has the potential to provide comfort, growth, and pain relief and to support personal, interpersonal, and planetary development.

Gestation of the Second Edition

Over three decades as a massage and bodywork practitioner inform each reminder and instruction in this second edition. It carries my voice, that of a seasoned practitioner, teacher, and author; it also carries the voices of other therapists, their clients, and other perinatal authorities. Just as the first edition culminated a swelling creative urge, my passion for this work and dedication to developing a body of maternity massage therapy knowledge infuse this second edition. Over a decade later, massage therapy, this specialty field, and I are more mature, more demanding and discerning, yet more energized. This “offspring” inherits these traits.

EXPANDED CONTENTS

As a second edition, Pre- and Perinatal Massage Therapy presents expanded content, both practical and theoretical. The four new chapters significantly expand content, elaborating on several topics skimmed or omitted in the first edition. These include the following:

- Positioning, draping, and therapist body mechanics
- Practical guidance for working with pregnancies when special needs arise, including gestational complications and high-risk factors and special populations of pregnant women
Pre- and Perinatal Massage Therapy

- Sensitive, appropriate inclusion of the oft-ignored interface between the body and emotions during the childbearing year
- A glossary of therapeutic massage and bodywork, anatomical, physiological, and other perinatal terminology, and common medications and procedures (an online obstetrical glossary will supplement this print glossary).
- The business considerations of marketing, recordkeeping, and interacting with other perinatal professionals, and the implications of ethical concerns for a successful practice
- Extended profiles and vignettes of practitioners’ practices in a range of professional settings

Moreover, using examples, principles, and insight, common ethical issues have been interlaced throughout the book and its online resources, including the following:

- Scope of practice
- Professional boundaries
- Dual relationships
- Power imbalances
- Transference/countertransference
- Sexual issues
- Development of supervision groups and other forms of self-care

**WIDENED, UPDATED PERSPECTIVES AND RESEARCH**

Obviously, a second edition offers the opportunity for improved accuracy and updating, and I have made many such improvements throughout the original five chapters. Since the first edition, the field of maternity massage therapy has seen notable growth. Results of an extensive survey of certified pre- and perinatal massage therapists reflect these developments. I have intertwined these insights into the technical and business sections, informing both with a contemporary practicality and relevancy.

Also, I have sought to create a current research view into the womb. I have culled facts and data relevant to a maternity massage therapy practice from newer, pertinent publications and from medical, psychological, midwifery, and somatic therapy research. Presented in a straightforward, accessible manner, these evidence-based data add currency and reliability to all recommendations, precautions, and contraindications.

Finally, where there are considerable differing opinions, I have included varied perspectives of other massage therapy and perinatal experts, sometimes those with considerably different viewpoints. These “Points of View” feature boxes and online discussions are intended to provoke thought and to reflect the evolving nature of the maternity massage therapy body of knowledge; “Points of View” topics include the following:

- Recommendations and precautions for safe leg and abdominal massage
- Massage therapy in the first trimester

**INCREASED QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF HANDS-ON TECHNIQUES**

What an improvement in the hands-on work in this edition! In three easily identified technique manuals, you will find new photographs, many embedded with relevant anatomical structures bringing greater precision and clarity to each. Most are included within the online video clips, organized into sample sessions. Additionally, verbal instructions have been revised to follow a thoroughly classroom-tested and logical format that deepens understanding and command of the techniques. This format includes the following:

- Techniques’ intention, imagery, and source material
- Procedural steps
- Relevant precautions
- Hints for ease, effectiveness, or variation for body size and conditions

As in the first edition, this instruction carries the accessible, friendly tone of a caring, seasoned teacher. They are clear and easy for other instructors to teach from, and they offer multi-intelligence instruction. I have interlaced facts and data with personal expression to represent both the science and the art that are the essence of effective massage therapy. Moreover, I offer each technique as a possible procedure, with sequences as suggestions rather than rigidly proscribed protocols. Therapists can choose from sample sessions, but those sessions only come alive when infused with their own spirit, creativity, and individual response to their particular clients’ needs.

In addition to these qualitative improvements, the quantity of techniques has also been increased in the second edition. I have added another 38 techniques for a total of 62. This increased number of techniques allows the following:

- A greater variety to choose from: complex to simple, superficial to deep, and physiological to energetic procedures
- A broader coverage of discomfort-specific techniques: every common discomfort associated with pregnancy, labor, and postpartum has at least one technique specifically designed for its relief.

**UPDATED ART AND DESIGN**

The second edition features a completely new art program, including photos or illustrations for all techniques. Beautifully and simply rendered line drawings complement and clarify
the textual content. Most technique illustrations even include embedded, relevant anatomical structures, increasing the effectiveness of this feature. In addition to the art, a completely fresh and updated design enhances the appearance of this book.

This edition retains the birth symbols, one of the most unique first edition art elements. These computer-generated versions of traditional textile designs adorn several features in the second edition. Women’s hands have woven similar patterns, sometimes simple, often elegant, into textiles and other art for over 400 generations. The diamond shape at their center depicts feminine sexuality enclosing a smaller representation of the child within, with arm- and leg-like lines projecting from the sides. It is still the most frequently occurring iconic motif rendered in Eurasian and Indonesian art. (Concept developed from Allen M. The Birth Symbol in Traditional Women’s Art from Eurasia and the Western Pacific. Toronto: The Museum for Textiles, 1981.)

An Overview of the Chapters

The first three chapters focus on why, when to, and when not to perform maternity massage therapy. The underlying rationales are presented first, followed by general and specific guidelines, precautions, and contraindications. Explanations accompany many photos to convey how to safely and comfortably establish the environment, set up and manage the equipment, and use proper therapist body mechanics and client positioning. Several decision-making tools and strategies will summarize these recommendations and give practitioners a thought process to follow as they apply the information to their work with individual clients.

The middle three chapters are the heart of the practical work, each ending with a technique manual. Readers can quickly access these hands-on sections using the colored bars edging these pages. Chapter 4 elaborates each trimester’s maternal and fetal changes, women’s physical and emotional experiences, and the accompanying pleasures, concerns, and discomforts that may follow. Practical considerations and guidelines for the therapist working in each trimester follow. A summary of recommended massage therapy for each trimester provides therapists with nondogmatic, nonprescriptive, but relevant hands-on guidance. The prenatal technique manual that completes this chapter complements this overview well. Here’s where the practitioner will find detailed, step-by-step hands-on prenatal procedures, concisely and clearly explained and illustrated.

Chapter 5 is a journey through labor and birth, highlighting the significant and specific role of a massage therapist who is part of a birth team. Each stage and phase of labor brings challenges and excitement for the laboring mom. General guidelines direct therapists in safely and effectively meeting women in the intensity of their labor experiences. The Chapter 5 technique manual elaborates specific, labor-tested procedures that practitioners might need during labor’s stages and for cesarean support. Special topics covered include self-care for therapists during the rigors of labor massage therapy, techniques to teach partners, collaborating with the medical or midwifery professionals, emotional issues, and ethics and maintaining professional boundaries while responding to the intimacy of labor and birth.

Chapter 6 explains the adjustments and healing of the immediate postpartum period, and the remaining time most women need for full recovery. This understanding of anatomy, physiology, structural adaptations, body use during infant care, and emotional concerns underlies the hands-on technique manual in this chapter. Moving past the first 4 weeks postpartum, you will find other suggestions and techniques for long-term recovery of function, gait pattern, postural integrity, abdominal and pelvic floor strength and function, and cesarean scar normalcy.

Most of Pre- and Perinatal Massage Therapy focuses on the roughly three quarters of pregnancies that follow normal, healthy development. My perspective is that of many perinatal experts: in most cases, pregnancy is neither an illness nor a medical emergency. I seek to empower women and their families by offering opportunities to develop trust in their bodies’ inherent wisdom and to attune them internally. I encourage their thorough education in the wide range of healthcare and self-care options available, carefully considering their advisability in their unique pregnancies.

That said, practitioners need to be able to recognize the signs of deviations from the normal prenatal and postpartum adaptations women experience. When physicians diagnose or midwives determine that unhealthy conditions are occurring, they need to know how to adapt their therapeutic sessions. Chapter 7 is devoted to these topics, zeroing in on prenatal and postpartum complications and high-risk pregnancies. It also discusses other vulnerable groups and those requiring special considerations, including those with assisted conceptions, diversity of partners, and survivors of childhood sexual abuse. Emphasis is on relevant adaptations and implications for session work, communication and collaboration with perinatal healthcare providers and facilities, and scope of practice and other ethical guidelines. A special section on working with women on bedrest rounds out this chapter for women whose pregnancies have special needs.

Chapter 8 and its accompanying online business resource center move theory and technique out into the world of therapeutic bodywork and massage practices. The nuts and bolts, forms and records, promotional materials, and considerations for bringing this knowledge to clients are at its core. Whether working with the occasional client who is pregnant or growing a pre- and perinatal massage therapy specialization, the therapist will learn the business realities. Certified therapists around the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom provided the multitude of materials in this chapter and the accompanying online business resource center that show promotions and client intake and interaction. A special section focuses on specific ethical issues
that inevitably confront maternity massage therapists. Suggestions for educational materials, classes, and demonstrations show how to appropriately teach safe touch for pregnancy and labor to women and their partners.

Finally, Chapter 9 and the online business center profile in detail and with a comprehensive overview what a maternity massage therapy specialty practice really entails. Chosen from over 5,000 former students, several very successful practitioners share, in their own words, their development, successes, difficulties, inspirations, and wisdom. Among these contributors are an owner of a pregnancy massage therapy center and practitioners on staff at a hospital, an obstetrical office, and an interdisciplinary healthcare center. Therapists at maternity specialty spas and in their own private pre- and perinatal practices share tips, practical experiences, and stories. Synthesizing prior chapters’ theory and technique with client interaction, this practical chapter would not be complete without hearing from expectant women themselves. Personal, moving stories in these moms’ own words provide a fitting closure to the text.

**Pedagogical Features**

To make learning even easier, the following features are included in the book:

- **Chapter objectives** provide measurable learning goals for each chapter.
- **Key terms** stand out in boldface when first used, with definitions collected into an end-of-book glossary.
- **Reminder!** icons punctuate important safety considerations and key concepts.
- **My Story** paragraphs describe personal experiences of clients or therapists.
- **Points of View** sections present topics of controversy among perinatal authorities, replicating a discussion group, with opinions of others supplementing and/or contrasting my own.
- **Technique Manuals** provide illustrated, step-by-step instructions for performing specific massage procedures (primarily in Chapters 4 through 7).
- **What Would You Do?** features present a brief, realistic scenario that a massage therapist would likely face in practice, with critical thinking questions to consider. Sample responses to these questions are accessible online.
- **Chapter Summaries** provide a review of the content presented in each chapter.
- **Test Yourself** sections provide 8 to 10 short answer questions to facilitate review of each chapter’s contents, with answers accessible online.
- **Icons** throughout the text point you to online video clips related to what you are reading.

**Online Resources**

An abundance of additional material is available by visiting our web site at [http://thePoint.lww.com/Osborne-Pregnancy2e](http://thePoint.lww.com/Osborne-Pregnancy2e) (scratch-off code to access these materials is on the inside front cover).

The Professional Resource and Business Center on the Student section of the website includes the following:

- Video segments of techniques with several women at different stages of the childbearing year. Arranged in session sequences, these clips synthesize material from throughout the book. They include the following:
  - Review of procedural steps
  - Clarifications of the most important safety precautions and contraindications
  - Positioning and draping using the sidelying and semi-reclining positions
  - Massage therapist body mechanics
- Obstetrical glossary with additional medications and other medical interventions, tests, and terminology
- Postural and session photographs from 3 therapists’ work in each trimester, and postpartum
- Suggested session sequences
- Articles and excerpts from contributing authors’ and therapists’ writings
- Marketing templates and examples
- An expanded list of contact information for resources, internet-based resources, and other information featuring United States, Canadian, and other worldwide companies, associations, and individuals, organized by those most relevant to therapists and to clients

**Instructor’s Resources** include the following:

- Answers to review questions and possible responses to “What Do You Think?” features
- Syllabi for several courses of varying lengths
- Image bank for creating PowerPoint and other visual materials
- Test Questions

**Summary Invitation**

Britain’s noted childbirth educator and author, Sheila Kitzinger, introduces her powerful anthropological survey, *Ourselves as Mothers*, with this statement:

“To be a mother is to take on one of the most emotionally and intellectually demanding, exasperating, strenuous, anxiety-arousing, and deeply satisfying tasks that any human being can undertake.”
To all reading this book, I would like to add the following:

To nurture the birth of a mother and of her baby with skilled touch is one of the most intellectually challenging, emotionally and physically demanding, humbling, and inspiring experiences that a somatic practitioner can engage in. Appropriate touch with childbearing women has the potential to positively change women, their families, and our world.

Throughout our history, human hands have woven the fabrics, shaped the vessels, nurtured the food, and cared for the individuals of our families and our communities. Nurturing, knowledgeable tactile communication has been vital to childbearing in most cultures for thousands of years. For millions of women, over thousands of years, touch has provided loving support and eased childbearing discomforts. During the last century, birthing has become increasingly medically managed, especially in many Western societies. While obstetrical innovations have reduced many perinatal risks, the texture of birthing, one of life’s most touching female experiences, has become less tactile and less woman centered.

I invite you to join me in reversing this trend and in the rewarding, life-enhancing practice of pre- and perinatal massage therapy.

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