

Massage Can Help Rub Out Menstrual Pain

Ancient Mayan Massage Helping Women Today

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POSTED: 3:41 p.m. EDT August 13, 2003

UPDATED: 4:46 p.m. EDT August 13, 2003

A new kind of relief for menstrual cramps and other female problems has an ancient origin.

It is Mayan abdominal massage for menstrual cramps. Mayan women also use it for menopause, premenstrual syndrome and to correct infertility.

Practitioners believe it can fix anything around the abdomen without narcotics or medication. The Mayan massage looks a lot like a conventional massage, except that usually focuses on tense muscles of the neck and back. This kind of massage is different.

The massage is supposed to encourage a woman's uterus to go back to its correct position. "It's very good for easing menstrual cramps or dysmenorrhea, also other symptoms of PMS and menopause -- things like varicose veins and hemorrhoids, it can help reduce the swelling and congestion associated with that as well," said Dr. Mary Scanlon-O'Kelly from the Center for Health and Healing in New York.

Tobie Stein had a lot of pelvic pain after a fall a few years ago. Nothing she tried helped.

"It feels like dull muscle pain below my belly button and in my lower back region -- the muscle area," Stein explained.

While many mainstream medical practitioners are skeptical, they said it might help, as long as serious medical conditions had been ruled out.

"It can be due to pelvic inflammatory disease, which is inflammation of the pelvic structures due to an infection. It can be due to a bladder infection or to interstitial cystitis," said Dr. Veronica Ravnika, a reproductive endocrinologist from St. Barnabas Medical Center in Livingston, N.J.

One attractive aspect of Mayan massage is that women can learn to do it themselves. Stein has been doing it for a few months and says it has eased her pain.

"I wake up with less pain. I'm able to walk. I used to be able to walk for 20 minutes and I'd have to sit down. I would be in excruciating pain (and) now I'm able to walk an hour," Stein said.

Mayan massage is not recommended during your menstrual period if you have an IUD, if you have an abdominal aneurysm, or after surgery. But for most women, it's a low-risk approach to pain relief. Practitioners said that for most women, it is a low risk approach to pain relief.