

spa | top choice treatment for new moms

by Grace Keenan, M.D.

When the baby arrives and takes the spotlight away, the new mother goes backstage. In addition to the physical strains of pregnancy and new motherhood, postpartum blues affects 60 percent of new moms, with symptoms beginning within the first ten days after delivery.

For mothers in the early months after delivery, The Medical Spa at Nova in Ashburn, VA, offers the 4th Trimester Healing Experience, which assists in naturally restoring the body while helping the mother feel better at the same time.

Hormonal balancing

Massage has long been used to help individuals in all stages of life heal their body and release tension and stress. The benefits of The 4th Trimester Healing Experience are to alleviate the discomforts that a new mother experiences immediately after birth and to help in the recuperation period, while assisting the return of the client's body back to its normal pre-pregnancy state.

The client sees the benefits of increased blood and lymphatic circulation, thus relieving swelling and edema. There is relief of fatigue, sore or stiff muscles, *bäckaches*, headaches, constipation and heartburn, which are all common discomforts for new mothers.

As with any massage, the massage therapist works with the guest to adjust the amount of pressure applied, and closely tracks his/her responses during the session. This is particularly im-

portant in the postpregnancy massage, where the massage therapist stimulates the glandular secretions that assist in stabilizing hormonal levels, making hormonal side effects less severe. New mothers may experience sensitivity, moods swings, tearfulness, poor concentration, anxiety and sadness. This hormonal balancing can facilitate recovery from pregnancy.

The massage treatment begins with a relaxing scalp massage and the application of facial and pulse point oils.

Deep relaxation

The application of various massage modalities are adaptable for postpartum massage and stimulate the parasympathetic response—rest and relaxation—in the mother's autonomic nervous system. This approach helps relieve general back pain and discomfort in the lumbar-sacral region associated with anterior pelvic tilt and lateral hip rotation.

The massage treatment begins with a relaxing scalp massage and the application of facial and pulse point oils on specific areas to begin the deep relaxation that the mother needs. Manipulation to this area promotes drainage and relaxes the face, which is a center of tension, and ma-



nipulation promotes general relaxation. The massage continues with oils to decrease the appearance of stretch marks and moisturize the skin. An eye compress is applied with oils to continue the relaxed state and hydrate the skin. ■

Check with the mother's physician before conducting any postpartum massage.

Grace Keenan, M.D., is founder and medical director of Nova Medical in Ashburn, VA, and a pioneer in the practice of integrative health care. Nova Medical combines science-based, Western medicine with complementary, holistic treatments.

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Hormonal Balance

Massage has long been used to help individuals in all stages of life heal their body and release tension and stress. The benefits of the 4th Trimester Healing Experience are a healing hour in the same means. The benefits and intention of this particular massage are to alleviate the discomforts that a new mother experiences immediately after birth and to help in the recuperation period, while assisting the return of the client's body to its normal pre-pregnancy state.

The client sees the benefits of an increased blood and lymphatic circulation, thus relieving edema and swelling. There is relief of fatigue, sore or stiff muscles, backaches, headaches, constipation and heartburn, which are all common discomforts for new mothers.

As with any massage, the massage therapist works with the guest to adjust the amount of pressure applied, and closely tracks her responses during the session. This is particularly important in the post-pregnancy massage, where the massage therapist stimulates the glandular secretions that assist in stabilizing the hormonal levels, making hormonal side effects less severe. New mothers may experience sensitivity, moods swings, tearfulness, poor concentration, anxiety and sadness. This hormonal balance can facilitate recovery from pregnancy.

Deep Relaxation

The application of various massage modalities are adaptable for postpartum massage and stimulate the parasympathetic response (rest and relaxation) in the mother's autonomic nervous system. This approach helps relieve general back pain and discomfort in the lumbar-sacral region associated with anterior pelvic tilt and lateral hip rotation.

The massage treatment begins with a relaxing scalp massage and the application of facial and pulse point oil on specific areas to begin the deep relaxation that mother needs. Manipulation to this area promotes drainage and relaxes the face, which is a center of tension, and manipulation that promotes general relaxation. The massage continues with oils to decrease the appearance of stretch marks, hydrate the skin and moisturize the skin. An eye compress is applied with oils to continue the relaxed state and hydrate the skin.