



Stamps massage in cosmetics and physiotherapy

Masaż stemplami w kosmetyce i fizjoterapii

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SUMMARY

Massage with herbal stamps has its source in Thailand. According to Thai tradition, a mix of Thai medicinal herbs is wrapped in cotton material, then heated and applied through massage to the body. Stamps are used on different part of the body. Moreover, they can be used alone or as a complement to other treatments. Herbal massage positively affects the joints and muscles, relaxing them and increasing their mobility. What is more, it relieves pain and has a beneficial effect on skin. The skin becomes smooth and nourished, recovering healthy colour and appearance. The massage starts from the back. First step is to make Thai massage manually and then apply warm, herbal stamps to the prepared skin by using the pressures and circular movements. It is worth mentioning that stamps are heated before the massage for a few minutes in the cooker, just to release essential oils contained in herbs. As the stamps become colder, massage intensity increases and hot skin absorbs active substances from the plant. Special care should be taken while massaging children, the elderly and people with diabetes. The most popular massage stamps on the cosmetics' market are: Amazonia, Chinese, Moroccan, Indonesian. In recent years also stamps with algae become popular. Furthermore, in modern cosmetology and physiotherapy wide popularity gains massage with a Shea stamps.

Key words: stamp massage, essential oils, vegetable oils, stamps massage

STRESZCZENIE

Masaż stemplami ziołowymi ma swe źródła w Tajlandii. Zgodnie z tajską tradycją mieszanka leczniczych ziół jest zawijana w bawełniany materiał, następnie podgrzewana i aplikowana na ciało poprzez masaż. Stemple stosuje się na wybrane miejsca ciała. Mogą być stosowane samodzielnie lub jako uzupełnienie innego masażu. Masaż ziołowy pozytywnie wpływa na stawy i mięśnie rozluźniając je i zwiększając sprawność ruchową. Łagodzi ból, wpływa korzystnie na skórę, która staje się gładka i odżywiona odzyskując zdrowy kolor i wygląd. Rozpoczyna się od pleców, gdzie w pierwszej kolejności wykonany zostaje manualny masaż tajski, a następnie na tak przygotowaną skórę aplikowane są ciepłe stemple ziołowe i za pomocą ucisków i okrężnych ruchów następuje dalszy etap masażu. Stemple przed masażem podgrzewa się przez kilka minut w parniku, aby uwolnić zawarte w ziołach olejki eteryczne. W miarę jak stają się coraz chłodniejsze rośnie intensywność masażu, co powoduje, że uwalniają się i wchłaniają w rozgrzaną skórę zawarte w roślinach substancje czynne. Należy zachować szczególną ostrożność w trakcie masowania osób cierpiących na cukrzycę, dzieci i osób starszych. Na współczesnym rynku kosmetyków największą popularności cieszą się następujące stemple do masażu: Amazonia, stemple Chińskie, Marokańskie, Indonezyjskie. Hitem ostatnich lat są również stemple z algami. Szeroką popularność nabiera we współczesnej kosmetologii i fizjoterapii również masaż stemplami Karite.

Słowa kluczowe: masaż stemplami, olejki eteryczne, olejki roślinne, stemple do masażu

Massage with herbal stamps has its source in Thailand. According to Thai tradition, a mix of Thai medicinal herbs is wrapped in cotton material, then heated and applied through massage to the body. Stamps therapy has been used in Thailand for more than 400 years [1].

The stamp treatment **based on three effects:** thermal, fragrance and direct action of active substances contained in the components of stamps. While heating, stamp releases heat, the fragrance and active substances. Moreover, Chinese stamps contain a large amount of natural antioxidants that helps fight free radicals, and theophylline which reinforces skin cells.

Traditionally, Thai stamps include turmeric, lemongrass, kaffir lime and camphor but stamps may also contain other components which is an innovation in this field. The use of stamps with guarana, sea salts and algae is a new trend on the western market. These ingredients have a strong aphrodisiac, rejuvenating and lipolytic effect. Moreover, they are recommended to anti-cellulite, modeling and slimming [1] treatments.

The impact of the treatment on the body:

Thai stamps massage tones the skin, cleanses it of toxins, smoothes its color and stimulates the skin microcirculation. What is more, it affects the overall improvement in the functioning of the whole body. The therapy is recommended for the stressed, for people living in a constant tension, for those who are tired, obese, and those who are struggling with cellulite [1].

Linen, bubble – shaped bag, using to massage is filled with unique herbs, seeds and exotic plants. Firstly, stamps are soaked in a special fragrant oil and then spot on the whole body. The oil is hot which reinforces feelings because it warms up the all “stamped” points of the body. Firstly, when the stamps are overheated, they are softly applied to the skin for a few seconds and briefly pushed to the skin. Secondly, along with cooling down, the time of “stamping” the body elongates. As the duration of treatment, when the stamp temperature drops, the pressure increases and the movements intensify. Do the treatment for at least 30 - 60 minutes to be sure that substances from the stamps are absorbed through the skin. Optionally, heat two stamps to one treatment to exchange the colder one. After the treatment, a short break in a warm room is recommended.

It is worth mentioning that stamps are used for the selected parts of the body. They can be used alone or as a supplement to other treatments.

Beneficial effects of a stamp massage are crucial. This therapy relieves pain and muscle tension, removes toxins and stimulates the body to regenerate and rebuild the cells. Moreover, intensive emission of the fragrance and heat from the stamp, makes the body and mind relaxed. Herbal stamp massage positively affects the joints and

muscles, looses them and increases their mobility. As it was mentioned, it relieves pain and has a beneficial effect on the skin, which becomes smooth and nourished. What is more, skin recovers healthy colour and appearance [2]. Also, the therapy improves blood and lymph circulation so that stimulates metabolism and removes toxins from the body. This treatment is extremely relaxing and intensively stimulating for the senses because of the scents of essential oils floating in the air. It is recommended to people who likes gentle techniques of relaxation [2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7].

Cotton stamp (bags), contain comminuted herbs and spices, which among others are [2, 8, 9, 10, 11]:

zingiber officinale - popular especially in Thailand, China and other countries in the region. It strengthens blood vessels, preventing them from cracking and helps to avoid the formation of bruises. In addition, it brightens the skin, relaxes muscles tension, stimulates digestion, alleviates pain, warms, improves concentration and mental performance. The studies showed that the derived ginger extracts, present both antimicrobial and cytotoxic activity [12].

cinnamomum camphora - helpful for colds, low pressure, muscle pains. Moreover, it generally warms, stimulates, is antiseptic, reduces nervous tension and helps in depression. Additionally, it relieves stomach pains, colic and clears the intestine. This ingredient is excellent for the elderly, women in the postnatal period, for the athletes with the injuries and for those who are overtrained [13].

lemongrass – calms, operates anti-inflammatory and antibacterial. What is more, it is helpful in depression. It also supports the digestive process. Used in aromatherapy, prevents nausea and improves appetite [14].

kaffir - lime - fruit and its leaves - in Thailand traditionally used as a spice; it refreshes relaxes and acts antiseptically [15].

eucalyptus leaves – stimulates mildly; is analgesic, antiseptic, also helpful for colds and fatigue (physical and mental) [16].

turmeric (Curcuma) - has strongly antibacterial features [17]. It also helps in gastric catarrh and other gastrointestinal disorders.

galangal - used as a tonic in stomach pain and in loss of appetite. It has antibacterial features [19].

gujava - anti-inflammatory ingredient. Applied as an auxiliary in the treatment of gastro-intestinal ailments and respiratory disorders [20].

tamarind - used in liver and gallbladder diseases [21].

The massage starts from the back. First step is to make Thai massage manually and then apply warm, herbal stamps to the prepared skin by using the pressures and circular movements. Then pressures and circular movements should be used. In a next step, they are followed by a further phase. These steps are repeated for each part of the body: legs, arms, abdomen, chest. It is worth mentioning that only

one area of the body is exposed at a time [1]. Moreover, the stamps are heated before the massage for a few minutes in the cooker, just to release essential oils contained in herbs. Initially, when the stamps are very hot, gently pass only short touches and press for certain places on the body. As the stamps become colder, massage intensity increases and hot skin absorbs active substances from the plant. Essential oils saturate the air with their fragrance which gives a wonderful impression.

Special care should be taken while massaging children, the elderly and people with diabetes. Do not use stamps on the twisted or dislocated parts of the body. Remember that stamps can be used 3 to 5 days from the first use. After use, keep them in the refrigerator or other dry place.

Furthermore, a stamp should be prepared shortly prior to the treatment. Holding the prepared stamp causes evaporation of aroma. As a consequence, stamp loses partially its fragrance and nursery features [22].

Preparations begin with spreading the canvas on the table, followed by the measuring and pouring the raw materials into the center of the material. Next step is to fold the canvas around the ingredients, turn it into a handle, then twist the material on the upper part and roll it down. Another step is to wrap the stamp with a string, starting from the top. The basic rule when doing this, is that the upper part of the string stays in a vertical position, adjacent to the stamp's handle. When the string is ending (after wrapping), tie it with a beginning of the string which was left vertically. The prepared stamp should be warmed in a steamer. Optionally, it is also possible to put them in a microwave oven (in this case, stamps should be wet). At the end, two actions might be taken. Either lightly soak the hot stamps in warm oil (eg. algae oil) or apply the warm oil directly on the client's body [22].

In the massage stamps, among others, the following variants are used: the South American (Amazonia), the Chinese, the Moroccan, the Indonesian and the algae stamps. South America stamps (Amazonia) consist of the guarana and milled cocoa seeds.

Cocoa is used in stamps because of the two fundamental properties: lipolysis (degreasing) and stimulation (stimulating). Cocoa contains theobromine and methylxanthine having very similar features to caffeine (β -phenylethylamine) which among others is responsible for our wellbeing [23].

Guarana contains a significant amount of guaranine, which is very similar to caffeine. It has a stimulating and energizing effect [24].

To form one stamp use 100 grams of compound. Then, heat the stamp in the evaporator. Prior to the treatment, make sure that the temperature is suitable for application stamp to the skin. Then, massage the selected parts of the body. It is also possible to use the stamp in combination

with oils, for example jojoba oil or melted cocoa butter. It is worth mentioning, that jojoba oils is derived from the ripe jojoba seeds.

The skin reacts to it very well, both with a massage, as well as ordinary care. The content of vitamins and substances with anti-inflammatory activity is an effective mean in the treatment of wounds, inflammation, skin affected by psoriasis or prone to eczema. As all waxes, jojoba oil has an unlimited shelf life [4, 7] and it is an important base oil in blends for oily and dry skin.

These two cases seem to be contradictory, but oil applies to both of them. On the one hand, the oil penetrates quickly into the skin, leaving a thin protective layer, which reduce excessive production of sebum. On the other hand, this layer protects the skin from excessive drying. This stops the moisture inside the skin, causing it to clog. Jojoba oil is also applied to the scalp and hair. You can add it to your shampoo or simply massaged into dry hair. Usually just a few drops is enough to restore the proper greasing of the scalp or hair natural glow. Jojoba oil not only nourishes the skin but also is useful to massage. If your skin too quickly absorbs oil during massage, you can mix it for example with an almond oil [7].

By virtue of its features, neutral scent and stability, it is one of the basic carrier for the eteric oils and their blends. Taking into consideration, the chemical composition similarity to unavailable ambergris oil, jojoba might be used as a substitute for a whale oil which is no longer used for the ointment manufacturing.

One of the basic rule that must be obeyed while using the herbal massage stamps is that for each variant of stamps, the massage therapist should use the vegetable and eteric oils blends or a proper vegetable oil that is the part of herbals and plants used in the stamps.

Chinese stamps are a mix of three ingredients: green tea, rice and lotus. They have a distinctive, pleasant scent of **lotus and green tea** [9].

Green tea (*Camellia sinensis*). Green tea leaves are picked, then immediately dried and rolled. This process helps to preserve the highest therapeutic values of the component. Green tea leaves contain, among others, polyphenol which has antiaging features and theophylline which has the stimulating features [25].

Lotus. Lotus seeds come from the crops located on the banks of the Red River in North Vietnam. In Asia, lotus is valued for its tonic and antioxidant properties [25].

Rice. Rice oil is smooth, easily absorbed through the skin, may moisturize it. In Asia, thanks to these features, is widely used for body massage [27].

To form one stamp use of 110 grams of compound. It is also possible to use the stamp in combination with oils, for example the rice oil. The rice oil has a distinctive

fragrance and yellowish colour. It is estimated that this is one of the safest, healthiest oils in the food industry. It is popular especially in Asian countries. Moreover, it contains a lot of vitamin E, which is responsible for regulations of body hydration, correct microcirculation of the dermis blood vessels, reduction of sensitivity to ultraviolet radiation and effective neutralization of free radicals. This oil, protects collagen and elastin fibers and regenerates it.

The rice oil is also a gamma-oryzanol which destroys free radicals, accelerates cell division, inhibits the formation of cancer cells, further slows the aging process and relieves the symptoms of menopause (hormone - like effect). Present, the vitamin B plays a key role in the process of fat burning. Phytosterols, in turn, regulate the skin's hydration - prevent it from drying. Rice oil is often included in cosmetics. It contains oleic and linoleic acids that soften and regenerate the skin, which is why cosmetics with rice oil are recommended for dry skin care and for that prone to discoloration. Rice oil is also used in soaps because of great antioxidant features, excellent for skin care. We find it also in the facial creams and body lotions as well as in oils for massage [1, 22].

Indonesian Stamps are a blend of four ingredients: ginger [12], coconut, lemon grass and nutmeg.

Lemongrass. In traditional Indian medicine, lemongrass has been recognized for its antibacterial properties. Contemporary research revealed its relaxing and refreshing effect on the whole system [1, 7].

Nutmeg. Nutmeg has been used as an analgesic in Chinese and Arabic medicine [4, 7].

Coconut. Coconut palm oil which is extracted from a copra – the coconut flesh, is used in cosmetics. Traditionally, it is used in body massaging and skin smoothing.

To form one stamp, use 120 grams of the mixture. It is also possible to use the stamp in combination with oils, for example, warm, coconut oil. Applied topically, it protects the skin against infections and soothes any irritation and inflammation. To add, it supports the natural balance of the skin, softens it, prevents it from drying and flaking. Moreover, it prevents wrinkles, sagging skin and spots on the body. It provides natural protection from harmful UV rays. It helps in the treatment of dandruff and is an excellent cosmetic for hair desiccated and also for a massage [1].

The **Moroccan stamps** include: sweet orange, lemon, mint and apricot.

Sweet orange. Essential oils contained in the sweet oranges are a source of vitamin C which has antioxidant properties. Substances included in orange, smooth and regenerate the skin, protect it from dryness and wrinkles. It strengthens the connective tissue and prevents “the orange peel effect” [4].

Lemon is an irreplaceable source of vitamin C and bioflavonoids. Mostly used in the care of oily skin. It fights inflammation and itching [7].

The essential mint oil, contained in the mint leaves, has smoothing, calming and refreshing features. Moreover, it stimulates blood circulation, acts as a detox, and facilitates the penetration of other substances into the skin. In addition, it relieves pain and itching, accelerates wound healing and acts anesthetically, [7].

Apricot. Jest to jeden z najbardziej popularnych i charakterystycznych surowców kosmetycznych dla rejonu Morza Śródziemnomorskiego. Olej znajdujący się w pestkach moreli jest bogaty w witaminę A oraz kwas linoleinowy. Apricot kernel oil regeneruje, zmiękcza i reguluje odpowiednie nawilżenie skóry [4].

To prepare one stamp, use 100 grams of compound. It is also possible to use the stamp in combination with oils, for example - apricot kernel oil. It supports the skin's ability to binding water and it is very well tolerated. Its properties are similar to those of almond oil, which is attributed to the two plants belonging to the Rosaceae family. The high content of monounsaturated oleic acid makes it ideal for skin care. It is designed for all skin types, especially for dry, cracking and sensitive skin care, including the eyes area. Durability of the oil is about a year [4, 7].

Marine stamps with algae have an extremely intense, very pleasant fragrance. They contain a mixture of sea salt and algae: Lithothamnium, seaweed nori (Porphyra sp.), ao-nori (Entromorpha sp.) and algae grateolupia [28].

Thalgo (Lithothamnium) belongs to the family of red seaweed. The appearance is similar to coral, is also known as the “coral sand”. Thalgo occurs in the clear waters of the sea at a depth of 10 - 30 meters. Its lime leaves are rich in a plurality of microelements and magnesium.

Nori (Porphyra sp.) Is a seaweed particularly popular in Japan, used, among others, to sushi. Nori contains proteins and minerals that stimulate and rejuvenate the skin.

Ao nori (Entromorpha sp.) Green algae reach in vitamin B, strongly regenerates the skin and is reach in iron.

Grateolupia is a red seaweed rich in microelements, proteins, vitamins (especially vitamin A which stimulates cell growth).

To form one stamp, use 180 grams of the mixture.

Herbal stamp use to the facial massage

To the facial stamp massage use Chinese and Moroccan blend.

Chinese blend. To form one stamp, use 50 grams of herbal ingredients used in the above-described Chinese stamps. Recommended for the anti-aging treatment. Stamps with a Chinese blend are rich in antioxidants, polyphenols and theophylline which is antioxidant and astringent. You can perform massage combined with rice oil [9].

Moroccan blend. To form one stamp, use 50 grams of herbal ingredients used in the above described Moroccan stamps. Recommended for regeneration, moisturizing and smoothing the skin. Stamp with a Moroccan blend are rich

in vitamins, flavonoids and fatty acids. You can perform massage combined with apricot oil [11].

Karite Stamps massage. It relieves strain in the connective tissue of the skin, muscle, periosteum, ligaments and tendons. The effect of relaxation might be observed in also these parts of the body which are far from the one we are massaging at the moment. The combination of hot stamping basalt, Karite Butter (Shea) and the patient's breath gives the excellent results of the treatment and removes the tension occurring in the body [29].

KARITE BUTTER (Shea) is obtained from the shea tree fruits, precisely from their stones, which grows in Central and West Africa. Shea nourishes, moisturizes and accelerates the process of skin regeneration. Moreover, soothes irritation and inflammation, improves blood and lymph circulation in the skin. Additionally, it is an effective protection against atmospheric pollution, which rebuilds the lipid layer of the epidermis, and also strengthens the intercellular bridge [29]. Shea butter is a thick, white, odorless oil. To connect shea butter with vegetable or essential oil, you must first melt it. Due to the high water binding capacity, it maintains the firmness and smoothness of the skin. Moreover, a significant increase in the elasticity of the connective tissue was observed after applying the butter to scars. Thanks to its thick consistency, the butter can be used to produce ointments, creams and lip balms. Allantoin contained therein, accelerates wound healing, while vitamin E and provitamin A cherishes and nourishes the skin. Durability of shea butter is at least two years.

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