



ASIAN BODYWORK THERAPY FACT SHEET

Created by NCCAOM

ABOUT ASIAN BODYWORK THERAPY

- Asian Bodywork Therapy (ABT) is the treatment of the human body/mind/spirit, including the electromagnetic or energetic field, which surrounds, infuses and brings that body to life, by pressure and/or manipulation. (www.aobta.org)
- Asian Bodywork Therapy is based on Chinese Medical principles for assessing and evaluating the energetic system. It uses traditional Asian techniques and treatment strategies to primarily affect and balance the energetic system for the purpose of treating the human body, emotions, mind, energy field and spirit for the promotion, maintenance and restoration of health. (www.aobta.org)
- ABT has existed at least as long as – and perhaps longer than – acupuncture and herbal medicine; it has come to be a recognized form of traditional Chinese medicine only recently. In 1996, the National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM) developed the first certification program in Asian Bodywork Therapy.
(<http://isabellehutton.com/asian.bodywork.therapies.html>)

ASIAN BODYWORK THERAPY FORMS

Under the Asian Bodywork Therapy umbrella, there are many modalities that are specific and distinct entities, including, but not limited to:

- **Acupressure** – A system of balancing the body's energy by applying pressure to specific acupoints to release tension and increase circulation. The many hands-on methods of stimulating the acupressure points can strengthen weaknesses, relieve common ailments, prevent health disorders and restore the body's vital life force.
- **Amma** – A specialized form of skilled (somatic) touch therapy that combines deep tissue bodywork with the application of pressure, friction and touch to specific acupoints, superficial primary and tendino-muscle energy channels, muscles, ligaments and joints. The techniques are aimed to remove blockages and free the flow of Qi (energy) in the body.
- **AMMA Therapy®** – A highly-refined and complex system of bodywork therapy utilizing techniques and treatment strategies combining the use of traditional Chinese medical principles for assessing and evaluating general imbalances in the energetic system and a Western approach to organ dysfunctions. The treatment includes the use of dietary therapy, herbs, nutritional supplements and the external application of herbal preparations.
- **Chi Nei Tsang** – This is an entire system of Chinese deep healing that makes use of the energy flow of the five major systems in the body: vascular, lymphatic, nervous, tendon/muscle and acupuncture meridians. With this practice, one is able to increase the energy flow to specific organs through massaging a series of points in the navel area.
- **Five Element Shiatsu** – This method identifies a pattern of disharmony through use of the four examinations and to harmonize that pattern with an appropriate treatment plan. Radial pulse, palpation of the back and/or abdomen and a detailed verbal history serve to confirm the assessment.

- **Integrative Eclectic Shiatsu** – This method utilizes Japanese Shiatsu techniques, traditional Chinese Medical theory and Western methods of soft tissue manipulation. Dietary and herbal methods are also included to create a comprehensive integrated treatment method.
- **Shiatsu** – Shiatsu means finger pressure and although Shiatsu is primarily pressure, usually applied with the thumbs, along the meridian lines, extensive soft tissue manipulation and both active and passive exercise and stretching may be part of the treatments.
- **Jin Shin Do® Bodymind Acupressure™** –This technique combines gentle yet deep finger pressure on acu-points with simple body focusing techniques, to help release physical and emotional tension. It promotes a pleasurable trance state during which the recipient can get in touch with the body and access feelings or emotions related to the physical condition.
- **Macrobiotic Shiatsu** – This method supports a natural lifestyle and heightened instincts for improving health. Treatment involves non-invasive touch and pressure using hand and barefoot techniques and stretches to facilitate the flow of Qi (energy) and to strengthen the body-mind.
- **Shiatsu Anma Therapy** – This method is based on the energetic system of Traditional Chinese Medicine in long form and contemporary pressure therapy which is based on neuro-musculo-skeletal system in short form.
- **Traditional Thai Bodywork (Nuad Bo ‘Rarn)** – This utilizes hand techniques and an unique approach to passive movement and stretching in order to open up the veins or energy passages and release chronic tension from the body.
- **Tuina** – A method of Chinese Bodywork characterized by the smooth gliding or rolling movements of the hands and arms. These techniques are used to treat a wide variety of musculoskeletal and internal organ disorders by opening stagnant meridian channels and encouraging the flow of Qi (energy) into deficient areas.
- **Zen Shiatsu** – This technique focuses on the use of meridian lines rather than on specific points. This form does not adhere to fixed sequence or set of methods that are applied to all. It utilizes appropriate methods for the unique pattern of each individual.
- **Medical Qigong** – This process is based on meridian and point theory that makes use of: breath training, psychosomatic exercises, meditation and guided visualization that direct the practitioners to create a place of health and balance in their clients.

ASIAN BODYWORK THERAPY CAN RELIEVE THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS

- The American Organization for Bodywork Therapies of Asia (AOBTA®) recognizes ABT is useful for the following ailments including:
 - Stress-Related Disorders
 - Asthma
 - Musculo-skeletal conditions (neck, shoulder, back and hip/leg pain)
 - Allergies
 - Headaches/ Migraines
 - Repetitive-motion stress & injury (carpal tunnel syndrome, etc.)
 - Seasonal affective disorders (SAD)
 - TMJ
 - Menstrual dysfunction and peri-menopausal life-cycle changes
 - Depression/ Anxiety
 - Gastrointestinal problems (digestion, IBS, constipation)
- The Shiatsu Therapy Association of Canada recognizes Shiatsu is effective in the management of many acute and chronic conditions from above and including these below:
 - Muscle tension and spasm
 - Insomnia
 - Chronic fatigue syndrome
 - Fibromyalgia

Arthritis
Sports Injuries
Sciatica
Whiplash
Thoracic outlet syndrome

INDUSTRY STATISTICS & FACTS

- To choose a therapist, the credentials to look for include:
 - Diplomate ABT (NCCAOM)
 - State or local license, certification/registration, as required
- According to the U.S. Department of Education, massage therapy/ therapeutic massage is different from Asian Bodywork Therapy. Massage therapy is defined as a way to provide relief and improved health and well-being through the application of manual techniques for manipulating skin, muscles and connective tissues. ABT is defined as a way to provide relief and improved health and well-being based on Chinese medical principles through one or more of the traditional bodywork therapies of Asia. (Excerpts from National Center for Education Statistics April 2002, <<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2002/2002165.pdf>>)
- Americans in their early to mid-50s today report poorer health, more pain and more trouble doing everyday physical tasks than their older peers reported at the same age in years past. (National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER), supported by National Institute on Aging (NIA), a component of the National Institutes of Health, <<http://www.nia.nih.gov/NewsAndEvents/PressReleases/20070305boomers.htm>>)
- Based on a national consumer research by the Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals, a full 33.6 million American adults aged 21 or older received at least one bodywork session in 2006, up nearly 9 million from the 2004 level. That represents growth from 12 percent in 2004 to 16 percent in 2006. (<<http://www.abmp.com/home/ResearchRelease1.pdf>>)
- Based on a survey conducted, most older Americans do not communicate with their doctors about their use of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM). Among people age 50 or older, 69 percent of those who use CAM do not talk to their doctors about it. (Survey conducted by the American Association of Retired People (AARP) and the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) at the National Institutes of Health, <<http://www.massagemag.com/News/2007/January/Older.php>>)
- According to an annual comprehensive report of Americans' health, *Health United States, 2006*, one in four U.S. adults say they suffered a day-long bout of pain in the past month, and one in ten say the pain lasted a year or more (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Center for Health Statistics, <<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/06facts/hus06.htm>>)
- According to an annual comprehensive report of Americans' health, *Health United States, 2006*, low back pain is among the most common complaints, along with migraine or severe headache, and joint pain, aching or stiffness. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Center for Health Statistics, <<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/06facts/hus06.htm>>)
- According to an annual comprehensive report of Americans' health, *Health United States, 2006*, one-fifth of adults 65 years and older said they had experienced pain in the past month that persisted for more than 24 hours. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Center for Health Statistics, <<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/06facts/hus06.htm>>)
- According to an annual comprehensive report of Americans' health, *Health United States, 2006*, almost three-fifths of adults 65 or older with pain said it had lasted for 1 year or more. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Center for Health Statistics, <<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/06facts/hus06.htm>>)
- According to an annual comprehensive report of Americans' health, *Health United States, 2006*, fifteen percent of adults experienced migraine or severe headache in the past 3 months. Adults ages 18-44

were almost three times as likely as adults 65 and older to report migraines or severe headaches. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Center for Health Statistics, <<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/06facts/hus06.htm>>)

- According to an annual comprehensive report of Americans' health, *Health United States, 2006*, between the periods 1988-1994 and 1999-2002, the percentage of adults who took a narcotic drug to alleviate pain in the past month rose from 3.2 percent to 4.2 percent. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Center for Health Statistics, <<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/06facts/hus06.htm>>)
- According to an annual comprehensive report of Americans' health, *Health United States, 2006*, the United States spent an average of \$6,280 per person on health care in 2004. Seven percent of adults under 65 said they passed up getting needed care in the past 12 months due to costs. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Center for Health Statistics, <<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/06facts/hus06.htm>>)

ABOUT NCCAOM

The National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM) is a non-profit organization that was established in 1982. Its mission is to establish, assess, and promote recognized standards of competence and safety in acupuncture and Oriental medicine for the protection and benefit of the public. It is a considerable professional achievement to earn the designation "Diplomate in Asian Bodywork Therapy (NCCAOM)." NCCAOM Certification indicates to employers, patients, and peers that one has met national standards for the safe and competent practice as defined by the profession. The first NCCAOM Comprehensive Written Examination (CWE) in Acupuncture (ACP) was given in March 1985. Since its inception, the NCCAOM has certified more than 17,000 Diplomates in Acupuncture, Chinese Herbology, Asian Bodywork Therapy, and Oriental Medicine. For more information on the NCCAOM, please visit its Web site at www.nccaom.org.

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