

What's it all about?

Welcome to the very first **i-newsletter!** Created and published by the Devon School of Shiatsu, based just outside Totnes, South Devon. **Our aim is to raise the awareness of Shiatsu** by providing information, inspiration and innovation. It will be published twice a year in January and July.

Shiatsu is based on the same principles as acupuncture, it uses meridians (channels of energy which lie beneath the surface of the skin) to rebalance the flow of ki (or chi) within the body. It is a **clinical and dynamic form of hands-on healing** including dietary and lifestyle advice, for the treatment of symptoms ranging from depression, migraine and back pain to eating disorders and gastro-intestinal dysfunction.

We will be featuring patient and practitioner true life stories of how shiatsu helped them and clinically focussed articles. In this issue, we reveal how Steve Davies benefits many autistic people with Shiatsu, and we will be shining the spotlight on Shiatsu and Pregnancy. In doing this...**Shiatsu will become a household name.**

SHIATSU & YOU

Devon School of Shiatsu

i-newsletter issue:01 January 2008

Shiatsu in Pregnancy by Liz Meadows, Dip.Shi, MRSS

Pregnancy is a natural process in a woman's life cycle but nowadays medical intervention and disempowerment is often experienced instead. Having had a lot of unexpected medical intrusion in the births of my two babies I developed a passion to help other women by using Shiatsu to prevent similar difficulties.

Shiatsu works really effectively and quickly in pregnancy, as the energetic imbalances are relatively recent. (continued on page 2.....)

*"posture has improved and mood swings are further apart and manageable"
read more.... in the article 'Creating Well-being in Clients with Autism using Shiatsu'*



Alex Turner Dip.Shi, MRSS(t)

Medical Students Explore Shiatsu

The Peninsula Medical School in Exeter has for the past five years been involved in an innovative scheme of special study units which attracts medical students, as an optional part of their training, to study complementary health. The Devon School of Shiatsu has welcomed more than 80 students through its doors since Peninsula was founded. The students incorporate their learning of Shiatsu, which includes 12 contact hours over a three week period, into research, for example "Are shiatsu and acupuncture effective tools for an easier pregnancy and more natural labour?" and, "Are shiatsu and acupuncture effective for chronic pain relief?" to mention just two dissertation titles. The medical school saw its very first group of qualified doctors enter the NHS in a variety of different fields last year. It is encouraging to know that there are increasing numbers of doctors entering mainstream medicine who have embraced the concepts of Shiatsu and Complementary Health.

Shiatsu for a Healthy Pregnancy and Childbirth

Daniela Coronelli MRSS(T) interviews Lorna Iddon

What made you decide to receive Shiatsu during your Pregnancy and how did it help?

I was a third year student of Shiatsu and had been trying to conceive for over a year, with no success. **I wanted to get my body into a healthy state for conception, childbirth and breastfeeding** and felt there were recurring health issues that needed to be addressed.

With the help of Shiatsu I did conceive and continued to have regular treatments throughout pregnancy, the birth and post-natally. Shiatsu supported and nourished me, through sensitive touch, which helped to relieve physical and emotional tensions, as they presented. My pregnancy was dominated by grief, as my father died three months before I conceived. **Shiatsu helped me to balance my emotions**, which swung from deep grief to feeling excited and joyful about being pregnant.

Shiatsu pressure on specific points, deep and sensitive touch on areas which were depleted, and tense and relevant stretches which moved blocked energy, brought great relief and supported me to cope well with the pregnancy symptoms as they arose. This was the first time I received Shiatsu during pregnancy and I experienced milder and shorter symptoms than in my previous pregnancies - especially with regard to lower back ache and abdominal pain, nausea, water retention and indigestion.

What I found particularly helpful were the dietary recommendations and programme of relevant exercises to practise throughout the pregnancy.



What role did your Shiatsu Practitioner have during your labour and how did she work alongside the Midwife?

I was giving birth at home with my two other children in the house so she became an invaluable birth partner as well as providing hands on pain relief. This freed my husband to be wherever he was needed and to support the whole process.

Shiatsu assisted me during the labour, working with whatever physical and emotional blockages appeared. I felt in tune with my Shiatsu Practitioner. She intuitively supported me in the most appropriate way and I could also ask her to work on areas where I needed pressure, heat, rubbing or holding. **It enabled me to feel in charge of the birth, stage by stage.**

Early in the labour she gave me a full Shiatsu session, focussing mainly on the induction points and preparing my body for birth. During contractions she would touch specific points on the sacrum, connect stronger areas of my body with depleted ones and encourage me to breathe deeply into my pelvis. This helped alleviate my pain and gave me a chance to regain strength before the next contraction.

The **midwife was happy observing from a distance, ready to step in** when needed. Having experienced maternity care with and without Shiatsu, I would strongly recommend regular Shiatsu sessions during pregnancy and childbirth, as it works with you in a totally holistic way, providing relevant personalised support for all the symptoms that present, and therefore minimising the need for medical intervention or drugs.

Interviewee: Lorna Iddon (now a Shiatsu Practitioner) 01803 868754

Shiatsu Practitioner: Daniela Coronelli MRSS(T), www.lifehealingarts.org

T:01803 862653 **For full version of interview see above website**

Shiatsu in Pregnancy *continued from front page.....*

Shiatsu can be used throughout pregnancy, **helping very effectively with symptoms such as morning sickness, anaemia, constipation, cramps, oedema, carpal tunnel syndrome, haemorrhoids and anxiety.** This can also be extended to post-natal care, helping with ailments such as heavy bleeding, retained placenta, wound healing, depression and difficulties with lactation.



I work very effectively with women in late pregnancy, who have gone over their due dates and need help with induction. This is often due to the fast pace of our modern life leaving them with little time to bond with their baby. This results in neither mother nor baby being energetically ready for birth. However, simply **using the Heart-Uterus meridian connects the mother to her baby** and is often all it takes in order for the process to go ahead naturally. I have successfully **induced labour on many occasions when medical induction was threatened**, some of whom have given birth within 24 hours, and one woman actually went into labour **within 20mins of the start of the session!**

Shiatsu can also help with pain relief in labour, and to move a baby who is in the wrong position. It may be that the baby is stuck because there is stuck energy in the girdle vessel, the 'belt' meridian around the belly. Using simple holding techniques to 'loosen' the girdle vessel, and using BL67 and Bl60 on the feet can bring rapid results.

This worked in a situation where **the baby had been twisted in the birth canal for many hours and the mother was about to be taken for a C-section.** However, after putting a lot of focus on the above points, and including GB21 and St36 for exhaustion, the baby turned, the mother went quickly into transition and gave birth naturally not long after.



"As little as 30 years ago, midwives would sit for hours with their hands on a woman's belly in labour"

Shiatsu is essentially an instinctive knowledge of touch and healing which we all have the potential to access. **There were many healing touch-based traditions within our Western culture, oral traditions passed from mother to daughter**, which have been lost, especially during the witch burnings of the middle ages.

As little as 30 years ago, midwives would sit for hours with their hands on a woman's belly in labour - this allowed everything to happen with the safety and nourishment of the motherhand. With the introduction of monitoring machines, these techniques were phased out and midwives had to see 5 or 6 women at a time and couldn't give individual attention.

There is a fabulous opportunity for Shiatsu Practitioners to work alongside midwives, helping them to rediscover basic instinctive skills, using relaxing supportive techniques which they are probably using in some kind of rudimentary way anyway. What better way to help pregnant women, than to introduce this training to the midwives and therefore into the NHS?

I am keen to pass these skills on to as many people as possible and run **Introductory Courses in Pregnancy and a course for midwives, doulas and other childbirth educators.**

Liz Meadows works from 'Bliss' in Totnes, South Devon, and is available for home visits if necessary. Please contact her on 01803 847851

Creating Well-being in Clients with Autism using Shiatsu

Working with autistic clients presents an interesting challenge to the Shiatsu practitioner. A major Shiatsu diagnostic tool is the initial verbal interaction between client and practitioner; however this is difficult for an autistic client.

The Client with Autism

There is little meaning to anything, no order, no boundaries, this can lead to major problems with trust and communication. Ritualistic and compulsive behaviour and the distortion of sensory responses limits the ability to integrate and process core information received during a shiatsu treatment.

While we must look at the extensive list of symptoms linked to a clinical diagnosis of autism, we also need to be aware of other mental health problems such as schizophrenia, bipolar affective disorder, ADHD personality and attachment disorders which sometimes can be very much a part of the autistic spectrum.

How a Shiatsu Practitioner Approaches Treatment

Where do we as practitioners begin? The simple answer is with perseverance and with intuitive work. I have learnt to discipline my Shiatsu practice, by bringing order to the sessions and putting boundaries in place, to create routine that the client can use, begin to relax with and feel safe. I like to feel we can build a partnership based on trust and continuity.

Let me explain these points in more detail and look at the benefits to the client.

I use the word 'perseverance' simply because with some clients the introduction of Shiatsu into their lives does not come easily, there may be some resistance to you as an unfamiliar figure in their environment. It may take more than one session to introduce them to the futon let alone be happy for touch to begin.

“Early intervention in the formative years would be ideal, but as most clients with this diagnosis are adults, it is not always possible”.

Steve Davies working with one of his younger clients.



Over the last two and a half years I have treated over 20 clients who have been diagnosed with moderate to severe autism. Some have taken to the sessions with ease, looking forward to each treatment, others have taken longer and have displayed signs of anxiety and fear, needing to be encouraged every step of the way,

Using a Five Element Approach

Looking at the five elements, all central nervous system problems will present with deficient Kidney Ki (Water element) from birth. Factors which influence their environment, for example family attitudes, stimulation, reactions and frustrations, are aspects to be measured which may further reduce the Kidney ki.

The balance between the Water and Fire elements is particularly relevant here. **Autistic people benefit greatly from validation from parents and teachers, as we did in our childhood,** to reach important milestones in their lives; by not receiving validation, their ability to build meaningful relationships in their adult lives is near impossible. The self-protection put in place (by the client) in my experience, is impossible to break through. The balance between the Fire and Water element becomes imbalanced leaving no room for joy (Fire) but creating space for depression and anxiety (Water).

“Overall, Shiatsu helps to improve posture, relieve stress and tension,.....”

Autism follow-up

We would like to say thank you to you Steve Davies and a big thank you from our son David, my husband Tom and myself for all you are doing. David has improved so much over the last year, it is obvious he likes having his weekly sessions of Shiatsu and we have some great photos of him.

Thank you for also working with our daughter. Her posture has improved and her mood swings are further apart and manageable.

Joanna

“Over the last two and a half years I have treated over 20 clients who have been diagnosed with moderate to severe autism,”

I have found that clients fall into three main groups:

- 1) tendency to lie in side position, very protective back showing ki depletion in all meridians on the front of the body,
- 2) those holding tension in every muscle, meeting like with like during a treatment, and with enough excess Ki to bounce around the room,
- 3) the last group display good posture, stuck Ki in the torso, good flowing Ki in the arms and legs.

Group 1 tendency to lie in side position because of the curvature to the spine with forward drooping shoulders, the inability to lie in supine, the back being too protective, allowing the Ki in the chest to become very low and stagnant. This is often the result of many years spent in the foetal position with lack of outside stimulation or motivation.

Over a number of sessions **improvement to posture is often seen as the structure to the back changes and softens**, breathing improves as Ki moves into the lungs, and the chest becomes less depleted.

Early intervention in the formative years would be ideal, but as most clients with this diagnosis are adults, it is not always possible.

Group 2 displays a tendency to carry no body fat, just solid muscle and will lie rigidly on the futon. Persuasion to relax is a part of each session but cannot always be attained, these clients will meet all pressure work with resistance and sometimes fall into a deep sleep still displaying muscle tension. Working with elbows and knees to allow deep penetration of Ki is hard work but the results are rewarding. By the end of each session, the **clients are relaxed and more easily respond to simple instructions.**

Group 3 mentally very alert throughout a treatment, relaxed arms and legs with good flow of Ki, yet stagnant in the body. Overall, Shiatsu helps to improve posture, relieve stress and tension, helps to improve digestion, reduce constipation and improve circulation leading to changes in habits and recreation. **Reduces teeth grinding and other anxiety related tendencies, improved sleep patterns, helping with relaxation during the day.** Clients have become more tactile and comfortable with others coming into their personal space, making them more tolerant of contact.

In my view, shiatsu can be of benefit to all displaying autistic tendencies. The results are rewarding to the shiatsu practitioner as well as the client, their families and carers.

Steve Davies Dip.Shi, practices in Portreath, Cornwall

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House of Lords Report on Complementary and Alternative Medicine

The Government has accepted virtually all the recommendations of the Lords Select Committee report. This includes stating that complementary medicine has a role to play within the NHS but must meet the same standards as other NHS treatments and be clear and realistic about the contributions it can make.

The Shiatsu Society (UK) is actively working with the foundation for Integrated Medicine (FIM) to support complementary therapies to reach the regulatory and research standard set out in the House of Lords Report. The Shiatsu Society is committed to ensuring that Shiatsu Practitioners have an appropriate national framework which can help safeguard both public and NHS purchasing of Shiatsu.

www.shiatusociety.org
T. 0845 130 4560



The Devon School of Shiatsu is the leading Shiatsu School in the South West of England. Three year practitioner training courses begin twice a year in April and September, next course begins April 19th. The three year practitioner training is approximately one weekend per month with further home study.

If you are considering a career as a complementary health therapist, why not send for the programme of courses from:

T: 01803 762593

E: info@devonshiatsu.co.uk

W: www.devonshiatsu.co.uk

Back to Life with Shiatsu by Alex Turner Dip.Shi, MRSS(t)

A survey by the Department of Health found that 40% of adults in the UK had suffered back pain in the previous 12 months whilst 15% of back pain sufferers were in pain all year. It's estimated that 11 million working days are lost each year as a result of back pain. These are dramatic statistics and if you are one of these people, you will know how it can make your life a misery.

Lack of flexibility, pain on walking and bending, stiffness throughout the body, sleepless nights and depression, these symptoms can lead to holding the body with rigidity and a lost feeling of unity. The body feels like it has fallen into separate parts and the back's function gets displaced to other areas, commonly the neck and shoulders. Increasing numbers of people with back pain are coming for Shiatsu and receiving very positive results. In a Shiatsu session, the practitioner looks at how the client energetically expresses themselves through their body, by looking at and understanding the life history, life situations, patterns and habits on an emotional and physical level.

The cause of back pain can be bad posture, old age, excessive weight, over work etc, but it can also be the control of difficult emotions e.g. a deep unconscious fear of failure or a sexual trauma, and the desire for adrenalin rushes to disguise these feelings affects the back. Repressing difficult emotions is hard work; it's like swimming against the tide. We can gently ask ourselves, "What are we subtly avoiding, what are we not flowing with to allow back pain to manifest?"

Shiatsu helps the letting-go of less useful habits that draw on our vital reserves of energy. Gentle stretches extend the spine and release tension between the vertebrae, deep holding pressure gives warming support to the back, pressure points trigger relaxation and release blood and Chi flow to the kidney area and spine, and rotation techniques of the pelvis release held tension. Shiatsu encourages use of the breath, inhaling consciously and exhaling into movement to help your spine back to its original suppleness.

Shiatsu treatments with Alex Turner are at Neal's Yard Remedies in Exeter and at the Exeter Shiatsu Practice in Mount Pleasant.

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Since I was introduced to Shiatsu by my niece in 2004, I have not looked back. At that time it seemed as if my body was working against itself, I had neck and back pain, my psoriasis was quite bad, my psoriatic arthritis in my hand was painful and I had started to have stomach problems; then along came Shiatsu with Angie Jones and over a period of time all of my problems have diminished or gone.

I still have a Shiatsu session once a month and I find it is like giving my body a monthly MOT!

Not only has my body benefitted from Shiatsu but I feel my well-being has as well, I am much more relaxed and if I develop any problems they are sorted at my monthly session.

Angie Jones is an excellent Shiatsu Practitioner, very kind and thoughtful and I find her life style, dietary and exercise advice very helpful too.

I would highly recommend Shiatsu.

Lesley Moore, December 2007

A real life story of Shiatsu healing



Angie Jones Dip.Shi. MRSS

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Find a Shiatsu Practitioner in your area:

www.devonshiatsu.co.uk/practitionerslist.asp