

# Unit B28

## Provide stone therapy treatments

### What you will learn

- Maintain safe and effective methods of working when providing stone therapy treatments
- Consult, plan and prepare for treatments with clients
- Perform stone therapy treatments
- Provide aftercare advice

### The Standards set out detailed performance criteria regarding:

- maintaining safe and effective methods of working when providing stone therapy treatments
- consulting, planning and preparing for treatments with clients.

The majority of these requirements apply to all beauty therapy treatments and are therefore covered in detail in Professional basics, G22 Monitor procedures to safely control work operations, and Body treatments – theory and consultation. You should also refer back to You and the skin, Related anatomy and physiology and B20 Provide body massage treatments, as required.

Treatment-specific requirements for stone therapy are covered within this unit.

## Introduction



*Spinal placement of hot stones is done for publicity only – the stones are not placed over the vertebrae in treatment and would be too hot for direct contact with the skin*

The use of stones for healing has been used for centuries, and stones have been around since the earth was formed. The correct term for stone use is geothermotherapy – *geo* referring to the rocks of the earth; *thermo* relating to the use of heating and cooling effects to stimulate the body's natural functions; and *therapy* for healing.

Indigenous people from countries with volcanic landscapes have always used both hot and cold stones for healing, and therapists have harnessed this as an extension of their massage techniques. Native Americans, the Incas and Egyptians were known to hold ceremonies, treatments or healing sessions with precious stones and rocks and the Inuit people use hot rocks worn in papooses close to their bodies for muscular ailments. In Russia, hot stone therapy is used with bathing, with the client lying on the stones so that the main **marma pressure points** throughout the body are

stimulated, promoting healing and a feeling of wellbeing. In Japan hot stones are placed on the abdomen after eating to aid digestion. So, many cultures use hot and cold stones to restore balance and health and to promote wellness and relaxation in the body.

### How does it work?

The hot stones are heated in a big electrical heater base with an inner water reservoir (a bit like a slow cooker used in domestic cooking). The stones are placed in the order that they are going to be used, on a towel to eliminate noise, and then water is poured over them and heated up. The use of a waterproof thermometer indicates when the working temperature has been reached and, when the client is fully prepared for massage, you remove the stones, drain and dry them and work them over the body, both as massage instruments and as placements.

The cool stones are chilled and kept in a small refrigerator or cool box, ready for use with alternate hot stones, or can be used on their own.

On a superficial level, hot stones within massage are a labour-saving device for the therapist. The stones aid penetration of movements by the heat emitted, warming the underlying tissue, and the stones are a smooth extension of the hands, making contact with the skin in place of the therapist – so reducing the repetitive strain that hands and wrists endure.

### Additional knowledge

#### Stone therapy in Western culture

Mary Nelson from Arizona is widely credited for introducing stone therapy back into Western focus with the introduction of La Stone Therapy™. She used stones from a sauna to help her with her Swedish massage clients, as she was suffering from repetitive strain injury to her shoulders and was told by her **spirit guide** to pick up the stones and use them.

### Key terms

**Marma pressure points** – there are 107 marma points all over the body which represent where the vital energies flow.

**Spirit guide** – according to some people's beliefs, a spirit guide (also known as a spirit teacher or a guardian angel) is a wise pure soul who has lived many times before and who acts as a guide and teacher to each human being, helping them to gain insight and learn life lessons during their time on earth.

On a deeper holistic level, the stones have their own high vibrational energy, connecting us to Mother Earth, Father Sky and the five elements: water, ether/wood, earth, metal/air and fire. These elements are provided by the earth and are the building blocks of every living thing in the universe, including the human body. Holistic therapists believe that we should honour the five elements as they are gifts from the universe and relate deeply to our bodies on all levels – physically, emotionally and spiritually. The stones can be used to open up the **chakras** of the body and chilled stones can be used on areas of inflammation and injury – just as a sports massage therapist would use ice. In fact hot and cold stone therapy is often advertised as a ‘fire and ice massage’.

More detail on chakras and ayurvedic principles can be found in B23 Provide Indian head massage, page 435.

### Think about it

Stone massage therapists believe in ‘the power of ten’: that one stroke with a stone is worth ten of the hands and that treatment is ten times more effective and deeper than manual massage, with ten times less effort involved.

### Think about it

Stones are used in two ways:

- 1 as *tools* held in the hand for deeper movements and more penetration into the tissues
- 2 as *placements* onto the body for deep penetration of heat, rather like a stone hot water bottle.

### Key terms

**Chakra** – spinning vortexes of energy. The Sanskrit word for chakra means ‘wheel of light’.

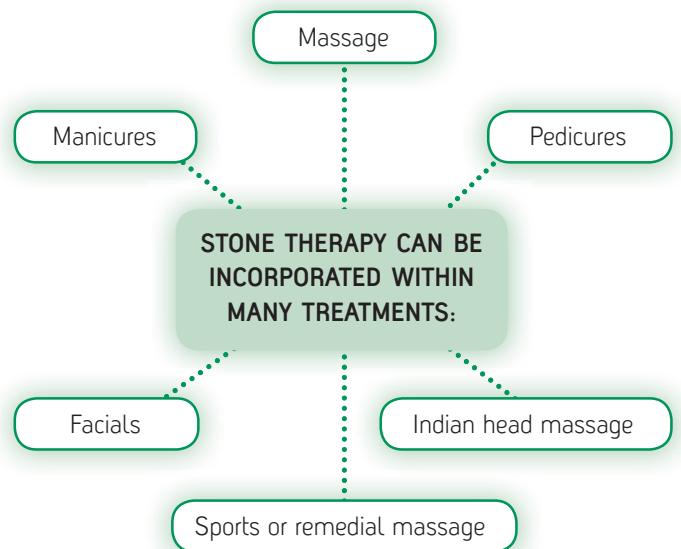
**Thermotherapy** – the application of heat and cold to alleviate pain and stiffness in muscles and joints and increase blood flow to the area.

**Cryotherapy** – cooling the body using extreme cold, either locally in the form of ice packs or generally, where the whole body is artificially cooled.

## Maintain safe and effective methods of working when providing stone therapy treatments

### In this section you will learn about:

- manufacturer’s instructions
- environmental conditions
- personal hygiene
- stones
- tools and equipment
- caring for your stones
- protection of the skin
- client modesty
- treatment time.



### Manufacturer’s instructions

- Hot stone heaters do vary with each manufacturer and you must not assume that all heaters operate in the same way.
- Some may take longer to heat up in relation to the water capacity (the larger the heater capacity in litres, the longer it take to heat) depending upon the size bought, which varies between a 6- and 18-stone heater.



A hot stone heater

- The way you lift out the stones may vary; some manufacturers supply gloves, others supply tongs or a slotted spoon.
- Some manufacturers name their stones, for example Grandfather stone, Grandmother stone, Father stone and so on.
- Some will recommend you turn on the heater prior to use for the first time and set it to preheat and run for an hour to burn off any odour or smoke from the heating element. (This will not occur again during normal use.)

The more familiar you become with the instructions and the more you work with the stones, the more you will understand how to use them to maximum effect. Do not use any other heater than the one supplied with your stones. A domestic slow cooker is *not* a substitute heater for the stones and, by not providing enough room for the stones to heat evenly, you risk burning the client if the stones develop hot spots. You will need more than one heater if you build up a regular clientele and you should allow for more than one set of stones, as they will need cleaning and reheating between clients. They will also need re-energising and you should never use dirty stones on a client, both for hygiene reasons and possible cross-infection, but also because the negative energy will build up and the stones will stop working effectively and will not hold the heat for very long. You risk transferring negative energies between clients and the idea is that they leave refreshed with open chakras, not weighed down with the accumulation of every client's troubles!

## Environmental conditions

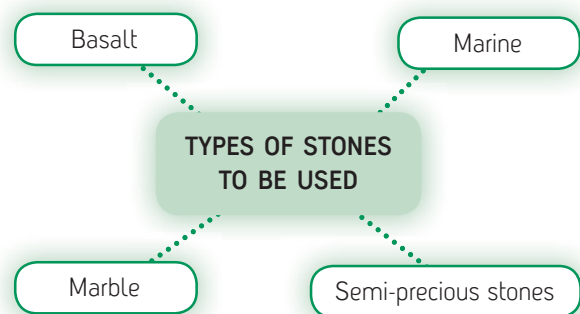
The environmental conditions for stone therapy should be exactly the same as for massage – the heating of the room, the lighting and ambience of the treatment areas should be one of relaxation and calm. The only real difference for the

client with a stone massage is that it can be noisy as you get the stones out, and when you first start, you may find you drop a stone or bang them together unintentionally, which can make the client jump! With practice and the placement of a towel in the heater and a towel lining a bowl or trolley to place the stones on after use, the noise can be cut down – and you will develop confidence the more you use them.

The massage techniques also vary with stones, because you do break contact with the client when you add stones or put stones down after use. However, as you develop your routine, the contact of the placement stones on the body keeps the continuity going and the client is not really aware you have taken off your hands to get more – they will just be enjoying the heat generated and relaxing.

## Personal hygiene

Personal hygiene should be identical to your massage routine and it is important that you still recognise your hands as important massage tools, so keep nails short and unpolished and hands flexible.



Types of stones used

## Stones

### Basalt stones



Basalt stones are dense, heavy volcanic rocks which have been naturally shaped and polished by the sea or riverbed over thousands of years. They are various shades of grey/green to black and will change in colour once they are oiled and used regularly. For use in stone therapy they should be smooth and regular with no chips in them. The stones are sourced from Arizona, Greece and Mexico – areas of previous volcanic activity. The basalt stones are formed under immense pressure and heat, creating their unique qualities. This molten rock contains pyroxene (a mineral), plagioclase (crystallised from magma activity from volcanoes), very high levels of iron and magnesium and other minerals which compress under weight and produce these compact basalt stones.

The stones are able to hold their heat for up to four times longer than any other natural stone. Once heated, the stones retain heat for a long time and release it slowly, thus making them the ideal massage tool.

During treatment the stones are skilfully applied to the skin using the medium of aromatic essences and specific massage techniques. The stones are self-adjusting to the body's own temperature requirements and will transfer heat according to the areas of greatest need, promoting thermal balance.

### Marine stones



Marine stones are found in waters around volcanic islands such as Hawaii and come from the sediment on the ocean floor. They are formed from the coral reef and shaped by plant life in the sea. They are used within cool massage as they contain lots of minerals. This makes them ideal for detoxifying and they also have anti-inflammatory properties. They are often green in colour, very smooth and some have distinct patterns, looking like two eyes.

They can be used:

- for broken capillaries on the face
- over the eyes for instant relaxation and cooling of the area
- to reduce puffiness and dark circles around the eye area
- to reduce headaches and tension.

### Marble stones

The cool marble stones are organic rocks, mostly made from calcite and limestone.



Marble stays cool due to its calcium content and it is really metamorphosed limestone (calcium carbonate re-crystallises under heat and pressure to form marble). The benefits of using marble stones are that they are able to retain cold for long periods and they are less messy and cooler than ice. They need to be handcrafted so they are more expensive than basalt stone, but because of being polished by hand the shapes can be made to fit particular contours of the body, with half wedges, rounds, corner stones and crescent shapes for use on the contours of the face and body. Marble creates heavy stones, yet they are more delicate than basalt stones and vulnerable to scratching. Marble is often the choice of building materials in hot climates; it remains cold to the touch and draws heat from its surroundings, so cooling the atmosphere. Marble stones in massage regulate temperature and cool over-heated areas of the body. This can often appear in cases of inflammation. They are also of great value to tone and firm the skin, especially the facial tissue.

### Semi-precious stones

Most stones and rock have some degree of crystal within them, so all rock could be called crystal – but what we think of as beautifully coloured crystal, with distinctive, easy recognition, are really gem stones. Massage that incorporates semi-precious stones is frequently a specialised treatment delivered by holistic therapists. The stones are often polished and used as part of a placement massage for spiritual healing and altering the mood in treatment rooms. Semi-precious stones have been used within ceremonies and traditions of ancient cultures and often symbolised wealth and importance. This is continued in modern day: do you know what your birthstone is?

There is a basic set of twenty crystals ranging from amber to quartz, and its most popular method for use is to open the chakras. Crystals can also be used with reflexology, aroma therapy and Indian head massage. See the detail on chakras and their relevant crystals/gems in B23 Provide Indian head massage, page 435.

The most common of the stones used are basalt stones, with a stone heater, and marble stones in a cool box for alternate use on the body. Crystal use is a separate therapy on its own and therapists spend many years honing their skills. Be careful of using the term 'crystal healing', because of its medical overtones. The crystals do have some powerful cleansing effects on the chakras and can open the emotions to free blockages, but this should in no way imply a cure from any ailment or medical condition. You are not medically trained and cannot claim to treat any conditions that require medical attention.

### Size of stones

Get used to the feel and weight of the stones and choose stones which fit easily into your hands for massage – if you are too clumsy with a bigger stone than your hands can comfortably hold and use, the awkwardness will transfer to the massage movements, which will not flow nor be enjoyable for the client. So, take some time to practise with those stones that feel best, and stick with them – obviously a male masseur with larger hands will use a bigger stone and be able to handle it with ease. A petite therapist may only use several of the smaller stones. This doesn't matter to the client. They will be unaware and not at all critical, and the larger stones make lovely placements on the lumbar/sacral area, under the knees and under the couch for energy balancing.

### Sensation of the stones

Stones come in all sorts of shapes, sizes and weights – in fact no two stones are identical, because of the way they are formed. You use similar ones in size on the body for symmetry, so facial stones will be the same size to keep the sensation of the massage even. Marble stones do have more uniformity of shape because they are hand-crafted and can be made to fit the purpose (for example, crescent-shaped to fit over the limbs).

Stone therapy uses a variety of shapes for differing purposes:

- round, small and large – which suits most massage strokes of effleurage and should fit nicely into the palm of the therapist's hands
- oblong – for deep tissue use, as the outer rim is ideally suitable as a finger-kneading and thumb-kneading substitute (saving wear and tear on the therapist's own joints)
- large half-crescent shaped stones with a flat side for placement either on the sacrum, under the neck or under the feet or knees
- C-shaped stones in marble, shaped for use on the limbs.

Whichever shape they are, the stones need to be smooth so they glide over an oiled skin and are workable. They should feel like an extension of your hand and be level, even and almost soft – that is the illusion because, of course, the stone is very hard, which is why the heat stays in the stone for up to ten minutes. The rougher stones can be used as placement stones only, and under either a towel or sheet so the client just feels the warmth and not the texture of the stones. For the client the stones feel warm, induce a comforting pleasant heat in the muscles and keep the continuity of the massage going, even when the therapist has broken contact to get more stones.

### Removing and handling of stones

- When they are brand new, unpack and wash all the stones and oil them thoroughly, using this time to familiarise yourself with the stones and their feel and weight. Pick the most suitable ones for your hand size. Don't oil the marble ones as they absorb it and this softens them and may cause cracking. The oil doesn't stay on the stones – this is just when they are new and you need to become familiar with them. Oil will also darken new stones slightly.
- The stones take up to 45 minutes to heat up to their full temperature, which should never exceed 66°C. The normal reading on your thermometer should be in the region of 120°F or 50°C but always refer to manufacturers' recommendations.
- Never place the stones on to a client without testing them on yourself first.
- Use the tongs or insulated rubber (waterproof) gloves or slotted spoon to remove the stones on to a towel by the client, ready for use.
- Always have a bowl of water on the trolley to immerse a hot stone in to cool it – if it is too hot for your hand it is too hot to place on the client.

## Tools and equipment

Always clean the unit thoroughly after each day's session and leave all equipment as you would wish to find it in the morning.

After removing the stones, the water reservoir can be emptied and removed, washed in warm soapy water and dried with a towel. The bottom heating part of your unit must never be fully immersed in water – it just needs wiping over with a damp cloth. Do ensure it is cool enough.



Rinse the removed stones in warm water with a small amount of mild detergent, then rinse in clean, warm water and allow to dry thoroughly before storing them.

Never move the heater when it is full of water and plugged into the mains – you risk tripping over trailing wires or spilling hot water.

Never add the stones to the hot water; always place them in the heater and then add water.

Use a towel to line the water reservoir as it muffles the sound, aiding relaxation. If the room lighting is quite dim, a white towel will enable you to see the stones' layout better, making it easier to pick them up quietly.

Never pour boiling water on top of the stones for a quick heating effect – you risk splashing and scalding yourself.

Only fill the water reservoir to just cover the stones and no more than 1 inch below the top rim – the heater will heat more efficiently with the lid on.

## Caring for your stones

### Sterilising

You should have a system of sterilising your stones between clients – and ideally have two sets and two heaters to prevent clients from being kept waiting, or spread out the treatments to allow cleaning and heating time. As the stones will have oily residue from the treatment on them, and any skin particles they may have picked up, they should be sprayed with surgical spirit, alcohol solution or a manufacturer's recommended bacterial cleaner.

Even if they have only been used once during the day, they will still need cleaning and sterilising.

### Recharging

On a monthly cycle the stones will also need recharging to restore their energy levels, to discharge all the negative energy they have absorbed throughout the treatments and to reconnect to their roots in nature. You can tell when the stones need recharging as they do not hold the heat for very long and are not hot to the touch, even if the water is at the correct temperature.

The stones can be charged by being:

- immersed in sea water – if you practise your therapies near the coast then washing the stones in natural salt water is ideal and they should then be left out in the sun and wind to dry

- cleansed and left in the sunlight for a day to absorb the rays (this is not suitable for crystals as they fade in sunlight)
- cleansed and left out overnight in the moonlight (cold stones and crystals are better cleansed in moonlight)
- allowed, if possible when the stones are not in use, to have 24 hours out in both sunshine and moonlight to rebalance, so allowing the perfect balance of **yin and yang** to be restored
- allowed any contact with the elements – left out in a thunderstorm, or in the rain, held under natural running spring water or soaked overnight in bottled natural spring water
- cleansed with crystals – labradorite or moonstone for cold stones
- cleansed with Reiki therapy, if you are a practitioner
- stored with wild sage sprigs
- placed on a bed of natural salt or you could sprinkle salt onto heated stones for a quick recharge. Never do this with marble stones as the salt will be absorbed and soften them, making them more likely to crack or split.

## Protection of the skin

- Use a towel or a sheet between the skin and the placement stone, if required, to cushion and avoid burning the skin.
- Some manufacturers suggest and provide bags, socks or small pillow cases to put small stones in for placement around the joints – even a facial flannel would be suitable as a barrier (but remember the thicker the insulation the more heat it will block).
- Remember that it is possible to burn a client with cold stones, too. If you remove the stone from the cold box and place it straight onto the skin it can give a cold burn. If this were to happen, apply a warm (not hot) moist cloth to ease the stone away.

### Key terms

**Yin and yang** – in East Asian thought, the two opposite but complementary forces or principles that make up all aspects and phenomena of life.



Protection of the skin

## Client modesty

Client modesty is exactly the same as for any massage and sufficient towels and blankets are required to keep a client's body fully covered and the heat in the muscles once the treatment areas have been worked upon. Please refer to B20 Provide massage treatments for a full towel and couch layout.

## Treatment time

Treatment time for stone therapy will vary – depending upon whether you are doing hot and cold stones, rebalancing of chakras and using crystals. The general rule of thumb is that treatments generally last slightly longer than Swedish manual body massage and are similar to an aromatherapy treatment in both time and cost involved. Approximately 90 minutes for a full stone treatment is standard – but you should compare with differing salons to ensure you are providing a fair and comparable service for your clients.

# Consult, plan and prepare for treatments with clients

## In this section you will learn about:

- consultation for stone therapy
- physical characteristics linked with treatment objectives
- using stones within other treatments
- how to do a test patch
- contra-indications to treatment.

## Consultation for stone therapy

As with all your treatments a full consultation should take place to ascertain the client's needs, treatment objectives, whether any contra-indications are present or the treatment requires adaptation in any way. You can use the body massage consultation form in Body treatments – theory and consultation, page 328, as many of the contra-indications are the same. Full consultation techniques are covered within Professional basics and all you need to do is adapt your consultation to the treatment you are currently doing. As always, the fundamental principle of any consultation applies: the client is the most important person and deserves your full and professional attention!

## Physical characteristics linked with treatment objectives

When using hot and cold stone therapy not only should you adapt the treatment to suit the physical characteristics of the client in terms of height/weight ratio and muscle/fat ratio (see Body treatments – theory and consultation, page 341) but also noting whether the client is a hot or cold person and their preferences. If a client is quite thin and feels the cold, does not have good circulation or suffers muscular tension, then they are an ideal candidate for a hot stone treatment. They need warming and soothing heat massage to raise body

## Think about it

Remember you will need written consent to enter into a treatment plan with all clients and especially those who require parental permission for a treatment. Refer to Professional basics, page 23, for more detail on treating minors.

temperature and create relaxation in muscles that may be tense due to the cold. However, if a client has a hot body, muscular and sporty with a tendency to sprains – then cold marble massage is going to suit them far better. You may want to start with hot stones to open up the muscles, but the majority of your work will be with cold stones.

Whichever treatment plan you mutually decide upon with your client, do ensure that they fully understand what the treatment involves: that they will be massaged with stones and have stones placed upon the body, and or be lying upon them, be undressed and in a prone position on the couch, as for manual massage.

Encourage the client to ask lots of questions – and perhaps show them the stones, the heater, how it works and let them hold a hot or cold stone or crystal during your consultation period. Just holding a smooth stone in the hand and stroking it will relax the client and fill them with enthusiasm for their treatment. Explain the physical, physiological and emotional effects of massage and what you hope to achieve. If you are also doing chakra work and placement to open and balance them, then explain to the client about a possible healing crisis and how the body develops contra-actions to rid itself of negativity and restore calm. Possibly, with a new client and as an introduction with a first treatment, it is better to focus on the physical effects and allow them just to relax and enjoy the release of tension in the muscles and even to induce sleep. As you build up your relationship and the client trusts you, you can then introduce the concept of chakras and the emotional balancing and cleansing of them.

### Using stones within other treatments



Another way to introduce the use of stones is to use them for other treatments such as pedicures and manicures, so that the client can literally see the stones being used and feel their benefits – and you can talk them through the treatments.

#### Manicures

- Use a large stone which has been heated instead of a pad on your manicure work station. The client rests a hand on the stone whilst you work on the nails and can enjoy the heat in the palm releasing tension
- Use the smaller stones in the bowl when soaking the hands – and encourage the client to play with them, stroke them and twist them around the fingers. Do explain that they are there, though, as if you use hand soak that bubbles up, they may not be visible. The bowl should be deep enough so there is no splashing of water to cause a spillage
- Do your normal manicure massage routine but use the hot stones and pick a suitably sized one for the client to hold in the hand that is not being massaged
- You can use hot stones to work in the exfoliant hand scrub
- The cosy toe stones can also be placed between the fingers when you are painting the nails

#### Pedicures

- Ideal for clients who suffer with cold feet and poor circulation
- Use a large hot stone or several small ones to put under the feet on a towel at the beginning of the treatment
- Use the smaller stones in the bowl when soaking the feet
- Work in foot scrub exfoliants with the stones
- Use hot stones for the massage
- Put the cosy toe stones between the toes when nail painting
- Give the client hot stones to hold and play with in their hands whilst you are working on their feet. This give you the opportunity to discuss body treatments using the stones and how beneficial it is

<b>Indian head massage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The stone can be used along with the fingers for parts of the massage involving palmar movements and kneading</li> <li>• The client can be holding stones in the hands during treatment</li> <li>• You can use stones as placements under the feet (as shoes are removed)</li> <li>• If massaging through the clothing the stones will need to be hot enough to penetrate through</li> </ul>
<b>Sports or remedial massage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deeper movements can be used with hot stones to aid penetration into muscular tension</li> <li>• Hot stone massage will aid lymphatic drainage</li> <li>• Placement stone can be used in the hands and under the neck, or either side of the spine as well as used within the massage movements</li> <li>• Cool stones can be used in conjunction with hot to help vasoconstriction and reduction of fluid retention</li> </ul>
<b>Facials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use placements under the knees, in the hands of the client and under the neck and, if the client requires it, over the abdomen over the towel or blanket (just as a hot water bottle would be placed for period pains)</li> <li>• The client can hold the stones in their hands</li> <li>• Small stones can be used for manual massage</li> <li>• Cool marine stones can be used over the eyelids during the mask or used as a massage tool to reduce puffiness around the eyes and aid congestion of the sinuses</li> <li>• Exfoliant products can be applied with the stones</li> </ul>

## How to do a patch test

Whichever use of the stones you choose, you should always carry out a thermal sensitivity patch test using hot and cold test tubes, in the areas to be worked, to determine the client responses to hot and cold (just as you would with electrical equipment – see B13 Provide body electrical treatments, and B14 Provide facial electrical treatments). Not only will this reveal if there is any nerve impairment in the area, which would be a contra-indication, but it will also show the skin's reaction to hot and cold and help you form a treatment plan based on the skin response and the client's personal preferences.

## Contra-indications to treatment

- Skin or scalp infections, ulcers, open cuts and abrasions, bruises
- Recent injury, operations or recent scar tissue
- Any infectious conditions because of the risk of cross-infection
- Clients undergoing treatments which require chemo- or radiotherapies
- Pregnancy or clients who are breastfeeding
- Diabetics and epileptics – GP approval should be gained and the letter attached to the record card
- Medication taken which would make the client sensitive to heat, or which thin the skin – Roactane or steroids either applied topically or taken orally
- Osteoporosis
- High or low blood pressure or clients who are very heat-sensitive
- Acute inflammation in an area or over joints
- Loss of sensation and failure to distinguish hot and cold thermal testing
- The very elderly or the very young
- Clinical obesity
- Any other contra-indications from a general massage treatment (see unit B20 Provide body massage treatments, page 392)

During your treatment consultation remember to keep the client informed about the cost, duration, frequency and the type of treatment you are agreeing with them, and your recommendations for further treatments.

Stone massage will be more expensive than a normal body massage and last about 90 minutes as opposed to a manual massage lasting an hour, and you may like to charge a small addition to your normal manicure and pedicure prices as you are offering a deluxe version of a standard treatment.

### Think about it

Always check for the suitability of the oil you wish to use, both to meet client needs and prevent an allergic reaction. Suppliers of stones also sell a lovely range of products to be used with them, some including essential oils. You can also choose from your usual body massage medium range.



## Salon life



### Jaina's story

My name is Jaina and I have been in my salon for about a year. I love hot stone massage treatments but something happened to me recently which reminded me just how different my clients are and what a mistake it is to treat everyone in the same way.

I had a young male client who wanted a full body massage. During our consultation, he explained that he was into sport, had lots of muscular tension and wanted a deeper massage. I explained the beneficial effects of hot stone massage on the muscles and told him he would get much better results with the weight and strength of the stones.

He told me that he was interested in a hot stone massage but had never had one because he was quite sensitive to heat. I told him that, although the treatment is called 'hot stone', they aren't really *hot* but warm and that we would do a sensitivity test so he could feel the heat of them before the massage, so he signed up for a course of six treatments.

At his first massage, I performed the sensitivity test by placing a warm stone on his forearm – one of the least sensitive areas. He flinched and said it was far too hot. So I let the stone cool in cold water and placed it on a higher part of his arm. He said it was still too hot. After I had done this three or four times, he said the stone was at a temperature he could tolerate. They were practically cold! I explained that he wouldn't get as many benefits without the heat but he said he didn't mind – he liked the feel of the stones and felt he was getting a deeper massage.

He really enjoyed his course and now comes in twice a month but I have to remember to turn the heater off! Some clients can take a really hot massage and others just can't. Everyone is different and I needed to adapt the treatment to suit him.



#### Effects for the therapist:

- Taking time to explain treatments in detail can lead to big sales
- Realise that no two clients like the same thing – it is very important to learn to adapt your treatments to suit the individual
- There is no set way to carry out a treatment, and you shouldn't make the client uncomfortable – the client is always right, and meeting their needs will determine how successful your treatment is

#### Effects for the client:

- Care and attention to detail really enhances the treatment
- Having their personal preferences taken into account means the client will trust their therapist
- If the client can discuss adaptation of the treatment they will have a treatment that is tailor-made for them – it will be more effective and more enjoyable

**For your portfolio**

Check out your own local salons and spas for prices for both hot and cold stone massage therapy. Have a look at which other treatments the business incorporates the use of stones with and how much additional fee they charge. A stone heater and kit price list can be found on any beauty supplier website and they will vary depending upon the size bought. How many treatments would you need to do to recoup the price of your equipment and what profit margin is there in stone treatments?

## Perform stone therapy treatments

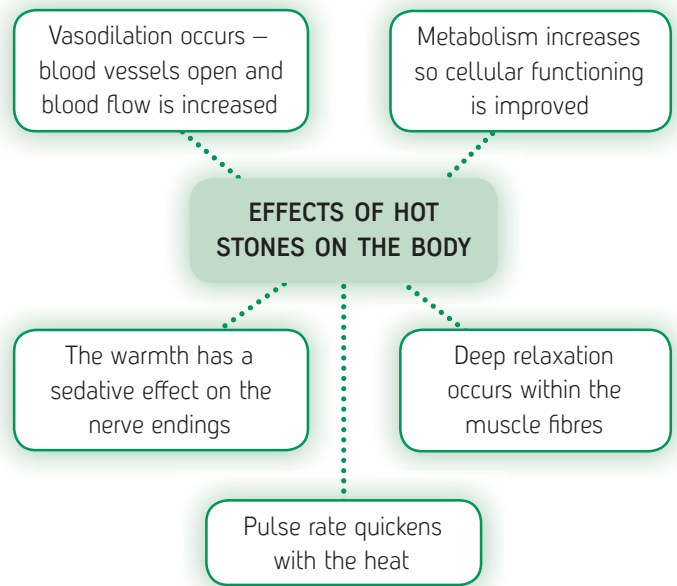
**In this section you will learn about:**

- the effects of hot and cold stones
- the benefits of using hot and cold stones
- stone therapy techniques and massage movements
- what you need for treatment
- client preparation
- the treatment procedure
- contra-actions.

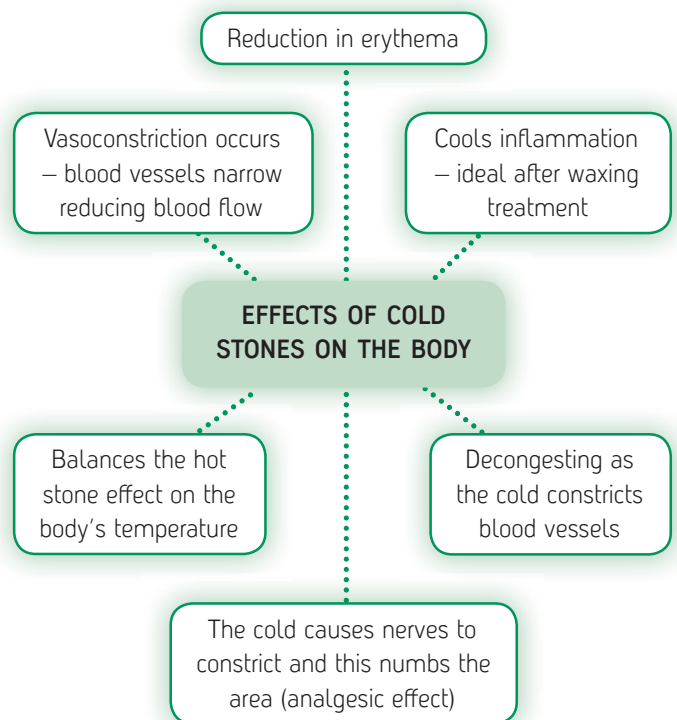
### The effects of hot and cold stones

Thermotherapy is the application of hot and cold temperature to restore balance to the mind and body.

The practice of thermotherapy can be traced as far back as the hot and cold bathing methods introduced by Hippocrates in 430 BC as a means of promoting positive circulation, boosting the immune system and relaxing the mind. More recently Sebastian Kneipp, a German monk and doctor in the nineteenth century, achieved optimum health in his practice with the use of alternating hot and cold baths and showers. So, his principles are used in beauty therapy to restore health and balance with hot pools, cold dips, saunas, steam rooms and plunge pools. The same principles apply with hot and cold stones.



*Effects of hot stones on the body*



*Effects of cold stones on the body*



## The benefits of using hot and cold stones

Stone therapy application of hot and cool temperatures stimulates the body's own natural functions, especially the circulatory and lymphatic systems, along with the nervous system. The nerve endings in the skin pick up the changes in temperature, move along the nerve fibres to the spinal cord and to the related organs and the brain. Generally the skin over a main organ is where its relative reflex point is – so any stimulation of the skin over an organ improves its function. When all these systems are working normally, all the body's organs and tissue and cell functions improve, promoting optimum health and giving more energy.

### Benefits to the client

- Boosts circulation – increased blood flow serves to bring more oxygen and nutrients to the area whilst speeding up the removal of carbon dioxide
- Speeds up cellular metabolism – increased in the area by 10–15% due to the local rise in body temperature of between 1–2°C
- Increases immune function – increased lymphatic circulation speeds up the body's own natural elimination process, boosting energy levels and ensuring full removal of waste
- Improves muscle and skin tone – positive circulation of blood and lymph serve to nourish and stimulate the skin's reproduction of healthy cells and the muscle fibres, leaving them healthy and toned
- Improves joint flexibility – increased circulation and lymph flow aids flexibility in supporting joint muscle by relaxing the connective tissue, as well as removing excess waste that can often lead to aches, pains and joint stiffness
- Alleviates deep muscle aches and pains – the hot stones heat the muscles and additional movement of the stones provides deeper penetration into the muscle structure than traditional massage; often the massage is able to reduce muscle spasms and chronic muscle tension and stiffness, especially sports-related tension
- Deeply relaxes the nervous system – positive circulation and lymph flow, especially to the spinal nerves and muscles, help to stimulate a poor nervous system inducing feelings of wellbeing, positivity and vitality

- Calms the mind – as all of the body's natural process are boosted the body feels less challenged, allowing the mind to be quiet and relaxed; at the same time the application of different temperatures unlocks deep emotional tension

The treatment aims to gain complete homeostasis – a perfect peak of balance for the body.

### Benefits to the therapist

- One stroke of the stone is equal to ten strokes of manual massage, so it is labour-saving for the therapist
- Prevents over-use in the joints of the thumbs and wrists and upper body – avoiding repetitive strain injury and hypo- and hyper-extension of the joints; the stones are perfectly shaped tools for giving the same effects of thumb and finger kneading
- The stones keep the therapist in contact with the client, even when the physical contact is broken
- The heat of the stones benefits the therapist – it will soothe the therapist and make the treatment relaxing for them too
- The stones act as a barrier against the client's negative energies, absorbing them so the therapist does not have to
- Offers the therapist a chance to give a deeper, more holistic treatment by clearing the chakras

## Stone therapy techniques and massage movements

Providing you use your techniques wisely, have the best interests of the client in mind, and the treatment is suitable for their physical characteristics, there is no set method of working. As you gain more experience, the movements you feel most comfortable with will become the ones you use most often. You will continually adapt your depth of pressure, your rhythm and techniques to meet clients' needs and preferences. Remember, all considerations when choosing massage strokes still apply with the stones.

Here is a guide to changing your Swedish massage techniques to incorporate stone use.

<b>Effleurage</b>	All of the normal benefits of effleurage, such as spreading the oil, warming the tissue and so on, are gained using stones. The stone should be held flat in the hand. You may wish to begin with the back of your hand and stroke with superficial effleurage along the area to be massaged first, then gradually turn the hand over to introduce the texture of the stone to the skin. This gliding of the back of the hand gives the therapist time to judge the heat of the stones; it also warms the therapist's hand and allows the client to get used to the sensation. Remember to take care over bony areas and that you can do more transverse effleurage – i.e. down the body, working along the length of the muscle fibres.
<b>Stroking</b>	A superficial gliding stroke is often performed with the outer edge of the stone, which reduces the amount of pressure applied, and it is really useful for finishing the movement at a lymph node to aid drainage.
<b>Combing/ stripping</b>	This is a deep, intense stroke using the stone on its edge, working the muscle along its entire length from its origin to its insertion. This helps pull the muscle fibres outward and removes tension, and is best performed when the stone has lost some of its heat, so use this after the first round of effleurage and stroking. It can be incorporated with the piezoelectric effect (see below) to create a deep release and stretch of soft tissue.
<b>Petrissage</b>	All the effects of kneading, squeezing, pressing and releasing of the tissue that you would achieve with the hands can be achieved with the stones – either flat or, for deep concentrated work, using the edges. Do remember, though, that you do not have as much contact with the body as you do with manual massage, and cannot judge the extra depth which the stones give. These kneading movements can be very deep – always check with your client that they are comfortable. It is not supposed to hurt! You do not want to cause bruising – clients may think that pain is part of the treatment and that they must put up with it, but whilst it's true that there is a certain painful pleasure in having tension knots removed, it should not be continuously sore. The client should not feel tender afterwards – if they do, this is a sign you are going too deeply into the tissue.

<b>Frictions</b>	Frictions can be simulated with stones by using the edge of the stone, to give mild pressure for a soothing feeling, or more concentrated pressure, to stimulate the nerve endings. This will entirely depend upon the client – whether they just need tension released or deep tissue manipulation. Alternatively, you may miss this movement out altogether if the client wants to fall asleep!
<b>Piezoelectric effects/ vibrations</b>	Swedish-massage tremors from the hands (vibrations) can be achieved with the stones very successfully. Vibrations can also be achieved by rhythmical tapping of two stones together creating sound – one stays in contact with skin while the other taps it at the top. This causes a transfer of energy – mechanical energy to electrical vibration that penetrates deeply into the soft tissue. You should gently remind the client of the noise. It may be momentarily uncomfortable, but this method is highly effective at removing tension knots.
<b>Stone placing</b>	The stones are placed on or underneath the body, covered by a towel or sheet to prevent burning. Never place stones directly onto the spinous processes of the vertebrae or over bony areas such as the scapula. Using placements before the massage softens and prepares the tissue; placement after massage continues the good relaxing work of the stones and keeps heat in the muscles.
<b>Holding</b>	The heated stones can be held in the hands or used as a prop during treatment for any specific problems in any region. Just choose a suitably sized stone to fit the area, and keep referring back to the client to check that they are comfortable.

**Think about it**

As with Swedish body massage, provide suitable cushioning and support if required.



### Trigger points

Trigger points are knots of tension which form from adhesions within the muscle fibres; they can be deeply imbedded and be present for years. They are most commonly formed in the shoulder, in the trapezius muscle, but can occur in any muscle. These can be dispersed by using the edge of the stones and maintaining pressure for between 30–90 seconds in the one area, when you feel the knot ease away; it melts underneath the stone. Use warm (not hot) or cold stones for this work and apply deep but firm pressure. There is a certain amount of discomfort whilst these are being manipulated, but they do diffuse quite easily with the use of stones and save the therapist using lots of finger and thumb kneading, cutting down the risk of repetitive strain injury on the joints. You can complete trigger work through clothes but if this is required make sure the stone is warm enough to penetrate through the clothing. If the stone used is very cold then use a child's cotton sock to hold it, so that you do not have a chilled hand.

#### Think about it

Once you are confident with the stones, you should be able to flip the stone in your hand every so often to disperse the heat and offer the hottest side to your client.

### Tucking

This refers literally to tucking stones under the client for additional heat – if you have some spare. This is a nice touch and feels very cosy. It can be done under the shoulders, under the knees, in the small of the back and even under the arms – in fact, in any nook or cranny! The key is to ask the client, and to continually check if it is comfortable, and do not place stones directly onto the skin if they are hot. Tucking of either hot or cold stones allows the stones to do the work for you and often by the time you get to the area where you tucked a stone, the area is lovely and soft ready for massage.

#### Think about it

You need to explain the treatment procedure to the client at each stage of the process; however, you do not want to disturb the client's relaxation by talking through the treatment. Talk through the procedure before beginning a new massage area instead.

## What you need for treatment

### The stones

Kits vary in size and price and range from anywhere between 6-stone sets to 54 pieces. The number of stones you require will also depend upon the size of your client, what type of treatment you are doing and if you are using both hot and cold and/or precious stones to finish. There are many variations and the treatment must be tailored to suit your client's needs: you may do a full body with face, placement stones and toe stones, or just a back massage with a stone on the sacral area, under the knees and under the head as a support, or just the limbs or just the face. This will depend upon your client and what you decide upon after consultation, the time available and how many treatments the client has already had. (You may wish to start with just a back massage to introduce the concept of the stones to your client, working up to a full treatment with positioning of stones a little later in their plan, when they are fully comfortable with the procedures.)

There are no set rules about how many stones to use, or how to use them.

<p>An average facial set will contain 38 stones made up of:</p>		<p>6 medium basalt stones 14 small 8 toe 4 medium cold stones 4 small cold stones 2 eye stones</p>
<p>An average body set will contain 47 stones made up of:</p>		<p>1 extra large basalt stone 6 large 20 medium 12 small 8 toe</p>
<p>An average semi-precious stones set will contain 7 crystals made up of:</p>		<p>amethyst blood stone turquoise tiger's eye rose quartz jasper sodalite</p>
<p>An average manicure and pedicure set will contain 28 stones made up of:</p>		<p>8 medium basalt stones 12 small 8 toe</p>





*You can also buy stones individually and in packs of two and four, or specialised half moon cold marble eye stones specifically shaped for the eyes.*

You will also need:

- your heater on a flat surface with a towel underneath it
- a towel to dry and tuck the hot stones in when they come out of the water
- your tongs, gloves or slotted spoon for removal
- a water-resistant thermometer probe to test when the water is up to optimum temperature
- a bowl of cool water to cool the stones in (if required) or to warm up a very cold stone
- a cool box with ice or freezer packs for cold stones
- massage oil
- all towels and blanket as for normal body massage to maintain client modesty, and to keep them warm and cosy
- a bowl or a tray nearby (on the second tier of a trolley or shelf) with a towel in the bottom to place the used stones, ready to be cleaned and reheated.

### Client preparation

When you have your treatment area set up, the stones fully heated and the temperature checked, you are ready to greet your client. For the consultation, many salons have a pedicure bowl filled with warm water and small stones in the bottom that you can use for the client. Ask your client to sit comfortably and soak their feet, getting them to rub the stones with their soles. Also give them a glass of water, in case they need some hydration. Using the pedicure bowl ensures the client's feet are cleansed and it grounds the client: they also get a few minutes to relax into their treatment and leave their problems behind, outside the salon. It starts the benefits of the treatment right away and they get to leave their negativity in the pedicure bowl. If you cannot offer this service, do make sure you wipe the client's feet prior to treatment, just as you would with Swedish massage – it does help the client to become centred on the treatment.

Other client preparation could include:

- the use of hot towels on the feet or on the area to be massaged

- dry body brushing using a bristle brush or disposable mitt all over to stimulate the skin
- exfoliation with a suitable product and removal with hot towels – just as you would prepare the skin before a self-tanning application
- the use of a pronged scalp brush and/or kneading brush for use on the head, feet, shoulders, thighs and palms of the hand.
- If the treatment is being offered in a salon with spa facilities, the client may already have been in the sauna, jacuzzi or steam room, and showered – so no further cleansing of the skin or heat application will be necessary.

All of these suggestions for client preparation will depend upon the facilities available, the time restriction of the client, the treatment objectives and the client's personal preferences – but however limited your working space and facilities, you can still offer a therapeutic beginning to the treatment and set the tone for the client.

If working on the face, and your client is female and wearing make-up, then this should be removed. Glasses, hair accessories and jewellery should also be removed and placed on the trolley – just as for massage.

When the environmental conditions of heat, soft lighting, warmth and relaxing music are set, the client is fully prepared and there are no contra-indications present, you are able to begin treatment.

Remember to carry out your thermal sensitivity testing on the client to check that there are full nerve responses prior to treatment.

#### Think about it

Stone massage is exactly the same as Swedish massage in that if you are relaxed and confident, the treatment will be peaceful and enjoyable for the client. This is why it is important to practise with the stones a lot when you first start – and that the stones fit snugly into your hands. They should be an extension of your hands and become part of you. Relax and enjoy it as much as the client.

#### Think about it

The stones hold their heat for about 20 minutes, so don't worry about them going cold once they are out of the heater – if you have the facility to wrap them in a hot towel then do so, as most salons have a towel heater.

**Think about it**

If you are doing cold stones after hot then you will need your marble stone in a cool box by the stone heater, and these can be used in exactly the same way as hot stones, either as placement stones or massage tools over muscles that need decongesting or are injured.

**The treatment procedure**

**Working on the back of the body**

You will need the large sacral stone, four stones for the sides of the body and four for the legs. Four slightly bigger stones are needed for the back. You also need cloths, towels or sheets for protection of the skin, and your bowl to place the used stones in.

- 1 Go to the head of the bed and prepare yourself and the client to receive the treatment. Connect with the client and ground yourself with deep breathing.
  - Go to the crown chakra, and with your feet firmly planted and connected to Mother Earth, close your eyes and breathe deeply. (A Reiki practitioner wishing to use Reiki may also remove her own shoes, as it grounds the therapist, but do check with your Awarding Body about that – it may not be acceptable under assessment conditions.)
  - Rub your hands together to generate heat and imagine a bright white light beaming into your body to cleanse you. You can silently offer a small chant or wish to say that you give this treatment with care and love for the client, with goodness and purity.



*Run the stones down both sides of the spine avoiding the edges of the spinous processes.*



*Be careful over the kidneys – ease the pressure slightly.*



*Move along the perimeters of the body and come back up to the lymph glands under the arms.*



*The edges of the stones can be used as finger kneading to release muscular tension.*



*Really knead into the top of the trapezius muscle to release the tension.*



*One or both hands can be used in the massage – if using one hand, hold a stone in the other like a hot water bottle.*



- Stop rubbing your hands and hold them over the crown chakra, either hovering over the client's aura or making physical contact with the head.
  - Ask the client to close their eyes and breathe deeply with you; co-ordinate so you are breathing rhythmically together. Ask them to visualise a bright white cleansing light and to blot out all external thoughts. If the client's mind starts wandering and thinking about other things, just encourage them back to the light visualisation and breathing easily.
  - To protect yourself against any negativity from the client, visualise yourself cocooned in a white or violet egg shell, which nothing can penetrate.
- 2 The client is in the prone position with just the back exposed – keep legs covered at this stage with a large towel. Remove the sacral stone from the water, with gloves, tongs or a slotted spoon (never your bare hands – you risk burning yourself), and place it on the towel in front of the heater. Test it with your finger and, if it is too hot, dip it into your cold water bowl for a few seconds; it should be at a suitable temperature for holding in your hand. Dry it off and place it on top of a towel on the client's sacrum, not directly onto the skin. Immediately the heat will start to transfer into the client's base chakra.
  - 3 Take out four stones and place them in front of the heater on the towel to dry off. Stand at the side of the client in stride standing position and place one hand on the sacral stone and the other between the client's shoulder blades. Gently rock the client back and forth for a few seconds and keep your breathing at a steady, slow, deliberate pace. Then place one hand on the client's hips and the other on the opposite shoulder and rock again, then repeat on the opposite shoulder and hip.
  - 4 There are two ways to work on the posterior of the body. Either massage the back only, as you would for Swedish body massage, and then do the back of each leg, or all of one side of the body together – so you need to expose one leg and keep the other covered. It is a matter of personal preference. Either way, take two medium stones and put them beside the client ready for use. Apply your chosen massage medium to the area to be worked and pick up a stone in each hand. In stride standing, introduce the stones to the client by gliding the back of your hand either up the ankle or, if working just the back, start at the base of the back near the sacral stone – but at either side of the spine, never over it. Glide and turn the hands over, to make contact with the client's skin. Follow your normal manual massage routine, using superficial and deep effleurage movements, but using the stones. You can use the edges of the stones for: kneading around the scapula; deep kneading for the subscapularis muscle, with the client's hand placed in the small of the back to open the scapula up; or a combing and stripping action down the erector spinae muscle. You can also tap either side of the spine to release nervous tension along the pathways (see 'Piezoelectric effects/vibrations' in the table on page 497, for more explanation). When you have covered the whole area twice, turn the stones over in your hand and repeat. Continual movement of the stones ensures there is no overheating of the skin. Once the stone starts to lose heat on the side that is being used, turn it over and keep it moving. Intersperse your massage with lighter effleurage linking movements, just as you would with manual massage.
  - 5 Before you begin the back massage, you may wish to put placement stones in the palms of the client for them to hold whilst you massage the back. Remember to test them prior to placement.
  - 6 Some manufacturer's instructions work the back from the head, using transverse effleurage movements down the back, rather than towards the heart. The therapist stands in the stride standing position above the head, and works the stones down the length of the muscles. Either method of working is acceptable and may depend upon the size of the client – you may not be able to reach the length of the back, to cover all areas from the head on a larger/male client and may need to work up the back, as you would with Swedish massage. Be flexible and try both ways – see which one suits you and your client.
  - 7 If working the entire length of one side of the body, start at the ankle and work up towards the knee. When you get to the back of the knee, turn to face the feet so that you are pulling the stones over the hamstrings to the top of the leg.
  - 8 Break contact from the leg and go to the hand. (Remember your sacral placement stone is still keeping contact with the client.) Slide one of your stones over the palm of the client's hand. Keep your stone and one hand statically in their hand and, with the other hand and stone, work up the arm to the top of the shoulder.
  - 9 Gently slide the stone all down the client's back and back of leg and return to the ankle.
  - 10 Repeat twice and turn the stones over and repeat twice again.

- 11 Finish with effleurage all over. If there is still heat in the stones, continue to use them; if not, use manual massage to end this part of the massage. When the stones are finished with, place them in your collecting bowl and cover the side of the body you have massaged.
- 12 Repeat on the other side of the body.

### Legs

- 1 Take out four stones, and follow the drying, testing and cooling procedure of the stones from step 2 as necessary. Place them by the legs ready for use. Either uncover one leg at a time and apply massage oil, or uncover both legs and treat them together with a hand and stone each. Either method is acceptable. Start with some manual effleurage to spread the oil and then pick up two stones and introduce them by gliding the back of the hand and then turning them over to work the stones into the gastrocnemius and hamstring muscles. Perform slow pressure circles over the muscles with the stone flat and then turn them on their edge for some combing and stripping work, finishing with light pressure on the lymph nodes at the back of the knee, to promote draining.
- 2 Finish with effleurage all over. If there is still heat in the stones, continue to use them; if not, use manual massage to end this part of the massage. Remove the sacral stone.

### Working on the front of the body

Hold the towels and ask the client to turn away from you, so that their modesty is protected.

- 1 Remove eight medium flat stones from the heater and follow the drying, testing and cooling procedure of the stones (from step 2) as necessary. Help the client sit up. Place the eight stones in two rows on the couch so the stones are at either side of the client's spine, between the hips and the scapula, when the client lies down again. There must be space for the spine to sit in between the stones (these stones should not be too small as it will feel uncomfortable for the client). Make sure there is either a sheet or towel covering them, to protect the client's skin from the heat. Lay the client back down, so they are resting comfortably – this feels like lots of hot water bottles either side of the spine and holds the heat into the nicely relaxed muscles that you have just massaged.
- 2 Take out the seven chakra (basalt or semi-precious/gem) stones and follow the drying, testing and cooling procedure, as necessary. Place them on the client

starting at the crown, then the third eye (check the temperature as it will go directly onto the skin) and then, over a towel, place the throat chakra, heart, solar plexus, sacral and then the root stone just above the pubic bone.

- 3 Remove another four stones and follow the drying, testing and cooling procedure. Place two stones under the hands and then two under the knees. Remember to check these are not too hot as they are going directly onto the skin. To disperse heat, immerse them in the water.
- 4 Remove the cosy toe set from the heater and follow the drying, testing and cooling procedure. Place them between the toes. The client is now fully heated and ready for your facial massage.

### Think about it

Never put basalt stones in an autoclave to sterilise them. If the inner core is still wet and the stone is heated to a high temperature, the stone may explode with great force.

### Scalp, face and décolleté massage

Refer back to Related anatomy and physiology, page 190, to refresh your memory of the different facial muscles. Remove two stones from the heater and follow the drying, testing and cooling procedure. Place them by your client's head.

- 1 Position yourself behind the client as in a normal facial. Remove the crown and third-eye chakra stones and use these stones (provided they are still warm) to perform a scalp massage, with deep circular kneading all over the head, then place them either side of the couch.
- 2 Apply the massage medium all over the face, chest (décolleté) and tops of arms over the deltoid muscle. You may need to move your placement stone for the throat down a little to gain access to the chest.
- 3 Using the stones flat in the hand, hold a position at the temples to start, then work up to the middle of the forehead and perform slow, light drainage massage movements along the hairline, finishing at the lymph nodes in front of the ear (sub-auricular nodes). Go back to either side of your starting position and repeat until all of the forehead is covered. Work slowly over the entire face and then turn the client's head to one side and perform light combing and stripping movements with the edge of the stones to the sternocleidomastoid muscle and trapezius muscle to relieve tension. Be careful not to put any pressure on the clavicle bone – this will cause discomfort.



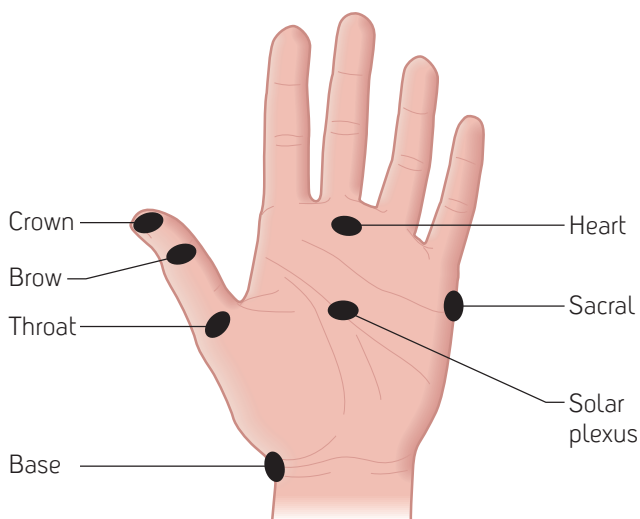
- Use the stone flat and get right under the shoulders to the trapezius muscle. Leave the stones tucked in under the shoulders. Replace the crown and third-eye chakra stones back in position and allow the client to doze off.
- You can also place the cold marine eye stones over the eyes to aid any decongestion and to cool the area.

### Abdomen

The use of stones on the abdomen is optional. It can be really nice to place a hot stone on the abdomen if the client suffers with period pains or IBS (over a towel or flannel, or encased in a sleeve), but it can be omitted if the client is contra-indicated and would prefer more work on the back. Follow Swedish massage procedures: always work in the direction of the digestive tract and avoid bony prominences of the iliac crest of the pelvis and sternum in a client with little body tissue.

### Arms and hands

- Take two stones from the heater and follow the drying, testing and cooling procedure.
- Wrap one stone in the hot towel and use the other stone as a tool for massage, following your normal massage routine for the arms. Use your free hand to support at the wrist and use your stone for circular movements in the palm of the hand, then supinate the arms and work all the muscle groups – flexors and extensors of the forearm, biceps, triceps and deltoid in the upper arm. Avoid the bony prominence of the elbow, but work around it with the edge of the stones.

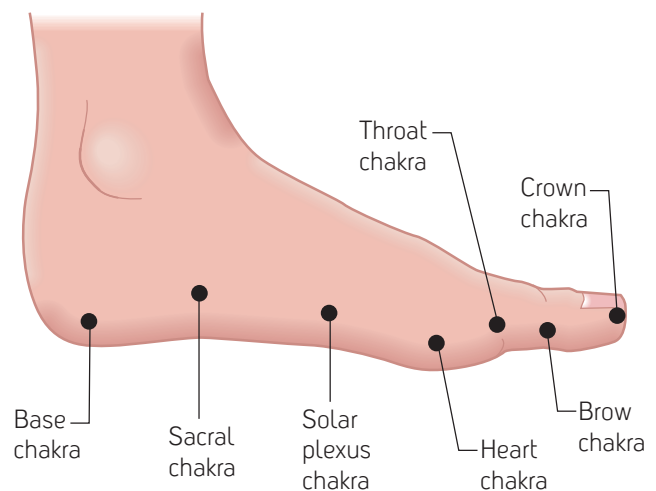


Chakra meridians of the hand

- You can close down the chakras by working the matching reflex points along the edges of the thumb, top of the middle finger and top and base of the little finger. Repeat on the other arm and hand using the other stone.

### Front of legs and feet

- Remove the last four stones from the heater and follow the drying, testing and cooling procedure.
- Uncover one leg at a time, remove the cosy toe stones and place in the used stone bowl. Apply massage medium and replace a warm stone under the knee as a prop, if not too hot. Follow a normal massage routine for the legs, repeating the same movements as for the back of the legs and taking care on the tibia bone.
- You can perform light effleurage movements on the front of the foot and deeper movements with the stones to the soles. Combing and stripping can be done in between the metatarsals and up the tibialis anterior muscle if there is tension present. Close down the chakra points on the foot, starting with the big toe, but reverse the direction of the movements if the client is a male.



Chakra meridians of the foot

### Think about it

When thinking about the direction in which you move the stones and the effect on the chakra you wish to have, remember a female spin is anti-clockwise, a male spin is clockwise.

### Closing down the treatment

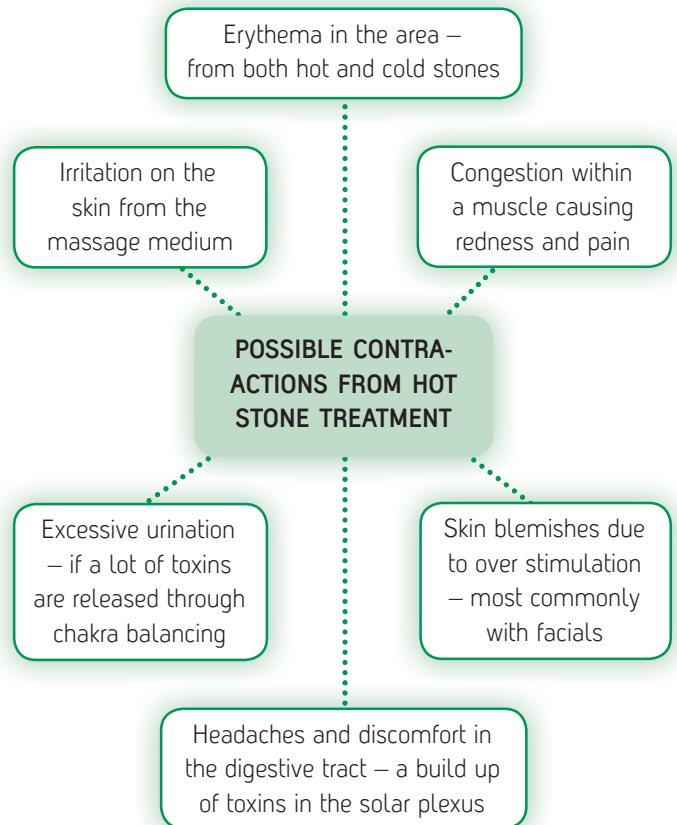
- To complete the treatment and clear the chakras, begin at the head of the bed, standing at one side of the couch.
- Take the crown chakra stone in one hand, the third-eye chakra stone in the other, and lifting them above the client, tap the crown stone on the third-eye stone three times and place the crown stone on the couch.
- Then take the third-eye chakra stone and use this to tap the throat chakra stone, then place the third-eye stone on the couch.
- Work down the body's chakras, until all the stones have been tapped and set down. Place them in the bowl ready for cleaning and gently wake up the client.
- Gently sit the client up into a semi-reclining position and offer a drink of water.
- Allow them to get up in their own time and offer the client the option of keeping on the massage oil, or removing it with extra towels or rosewater on a cotton pad.
- Whilst they are waking up and reviving their consciousness, you must wash your hands thoroughly to get rid of the negative energy you may have absorbed from the stones. Do not begin tidying up and cleaning the stones yet – it is too noisy for the client. Wait until they have left the treatment room.
- Allow the client to rest and check that they are happy with the treatment they have received, and note anything they would prefer for next time on their record card.
- Talk through the aftercare and long-term health benefits of regular treatments, and your further treatment plans or combinations of treatment specifically for their needs.

#### Think about it

- Always follow the drying, testing and cooling procedure.
- Always make sure the skin is protected from the direct heat of the stones by using face cloths, towels or sheets as a barrier.
- Always ensure that the skin is sufficiently lubricated – check that the client has no allergies to the chosen oil.
- Minimise excessive noise and therefore disturbance to the client by using towels to line both the used stone bowl and the heater.
- Always allow sufficient post-treatment recovery time – the body needs to readjust. Allow the client sufficient time to become fully aware of their surroundings, especially if they are going to be driving and/or going back to work.

### Contra-actions

Never underestimate both the effect of the heat from the stones on the body and the effects of clearing the chakras. There may be mixed contra-actions and reactions to treatment, ranging from excessive erythema under a placement stone – to a slight dizziness when becoming upright.



#### Possible contra-actions from treatment

These contra-actions should not last long and are an indication that the treatment has been successful but stimulating. Make sure the client is aware of the possibility of these contra-actions and allow time for the body to balance itself out and heal – obviously if the client has a strong reaction to the oil, you should act immediately and remove it, apply a cool compress or the cold stones to the area and stop the treatment.

A healing crisis (see Professional basics, 'You the therapist', page 27) may also occur if the client has bottled-up emotions and been over-doing things, has high stress levels, suffered a bereavement or stored up lots of negative energy. The treatment often relaxes the client so much that the



blockages are removed. Tears are not uncommon and the client may feel completely drained and very tired. This is the body's way of asking for rest and recuperation time. On the client's next visit ask them about their reactions and make some notes on the record card about how the treatment affected them. The removal of toxins and emotional balancing may also show as disturbed sleep, disturbed digestion, upset tummy, irregular bowel movements and bloatedness. All of these are signs of rebalancing and the body ridding itself of the toxic build-up.

Once the client is prepared for this to happen and gives in to it with rest, and you explain that with regular treatments the balancing gets easier, the client feels more centred and balanced and this gives their whole outlook a lighter more positive feel.

## Provide aftercare advice

### In this section you will learn about:

- aftercare advice.

## Aftercare advice

### Immediate aftercare advice

- Ensure the skin is left grease-free and all the massage medium has been removed (unless the client wants it left on the skin, if it is excessively dry).
- Make sure the client gradually becomes vertical after lying down for so long, as this allows the blood flow to the brain to increase and so prevent any dizziness or faintness occurring.
- The client should be rehydrated with a glass of water and encouraged to drink lots of water within 24–48 hours.
- Avoid electrical or heat treatments for 12–24 hours.
- Avoid loud or aggressive people if possible to maintain the calming effect of the treatments.
- Avoid heavy mental stimulation where possible – ideally recommend that the client doesn't go back to work straight away after treatment.
- Avoid alcohol and spicy foods for the remainder of the day.
- Avoid or minimise any stimulation such as loud or aggressive films, loud music or games.
- Rest if possible and sleep – even if it is a siesta for half an hour in the middle of the day. It allows the body to restore balance.

### Additional knowledge

#### Fainting

Fainting is the body's way of making sure that the brain is on the same level as the heart and therefore receives enough vital blood flow and oxygen – the body's quickest way is to make the body limp and horizontal.

### Long-term aftercare advice

- Be constructive and kind to your client and give specific advice relating to their individual needs. Everyone has differing stress levels and trigger points so what is stressful for one person is not the same as for another. Stress is not necessarily a bad thing and keeps us focused and in peak condition for important events or performances – but too much stress will have a negative effect, and how we cope with it differs greatly between individuals.
- Look at the client's work/life balance or any other lifestyle patterns that may be causing stress and pressure on the body and find ways to minimise and reduce it. Sometimes it needs an outside observer (the therapist) to be able to see where improvements can be made. The client often doesn't see that their high stress levels or own internal pressure can become the norm to them – but is not good for the body, long term. This is often the case with the perfectionist who cannot possibly maintain a perfect everything, but cannot stop striving for it, so causing immense pressure, resulting in tension, eating disorders and an irritable bowel, or other symptoms.
- Encourage the client to take up yoga, meditation, learn a musical instrument or join a choir – anything that allows them to enjoy an activity to the extent that they are living 'in the moment' and are completely absorbed, so cannot worry about anything else. Children have that ability and adults need to copy it – rather than worrying about what is next to do, or worrying about tomorrow.
- Promote good health in the client by encouraging a balanced diet, gentle exercise and less salt and alcohol. Smoking, alcohol and drugs are toxins to the body and clients who rely on them for relaxation are only over-stimulating an already over-loaded body. By cutting down, it reduces the stimulation and promotes relaxation.

- Give the client permission to take time out and enjoy simpler pleasures. Activities which connect back to Mother Earth, such as gardening, are excellent for grounding, as are unselfish deeds or help given to others
- Encourage positive thoughts with the client so that they feel better about themselves, rather than getting caught in a cycle of negativity, which is often very difficult to break. Ask the client to name one thing they enjoy and are good at – it could be handwriting, cooking skills, organisation, playing an instrument, card making or home making. Whatever it is, the client should give a positive affirmation of it, rather than focusing on what they cannot do, or have not got.
- Home treatments between the salon treatments should include moisturising and caring for the skin's condition, the use of heat such as a hot water bottle on muscular areas of tension, relaxing baths and relaxation periods for enjoyment – hobbies are essential for mental well-being. Spending time with family and sharing laughter

and food with good friends is as therapeutic as some salon treatments. Discourage clients from buying oils for aromatherapy over the counter and adding them to the bath; recommend pre-blended ones from the salon – then at least you know the composition and strength of the products.

- Discuss further options and treatments with the client that may also promote good health and mental well-being. Stone therapy complements aromatherapy – oils can be added to massage oil or added to the water which is heating the stones. Indian head massage, if the client wants a shorter treatment which is not full body or Swedish massage, is another option. Other treatments which will make the client feel better about their appearance can be good morale boosters – so introduce your Level 2 treatments too. Even a simple eyebrow shape, skin improvement or a manicure for someone who bites their nails will encourage self awareness and confidence.

### Check your knowledge

- 1 What are the five elements to stone therapy?
  - a) Water, ether/wood, earth, metal/air and fire
  - b) Earth, wind, fire, rain and wood
  - c) Ice, hail, wind, rain and snow
  - d) Earth, moon, stars, sky and sea
- 2 Which of these is *not* a contra-indication to treatment?
  - a) Contagious skin diseases
  - b) Loss of skin sensitivity
  - c) Varicose veins
  - d) Radiotherapy
- 3 Which of these is *not* a type of stone used?
 

a) Basalt	c) Marble
b) Marine	d) Purbeck
- 4 The test for thermal sensitivity will show if:
  - a) the client has good skin
  - b) the client has any loss of sensation
  - c) the client goes red with heat
  - d) the client likes hot treatments.
- 5 The chakras can be described as:
  - a) spinning circles of cells
  - b) spinning vortexes of energy
  - c) the control panel for the body
  - d) the central core of the body.
- 6 The Piezoelectric effects are achieved by using which movements?
  - a) Effleurage
  - b) Tapotement
  - c) Vibrations
  - d) Tapotement
- 7 The average time it takes for heaters to heat up the stones is:
 

a) 20 minutes	c) 45 minutes
b) 30 minutes	d) 60 minutes.
- 8 The heater/water temperature should never exceed:
 

a) 45°C	c) 60°C
b) 50°C	d) 66°C.
- 9 Vasoconstriction is when:
  - a) blood vessels narrow, reducing blood flow
  - b) blood vessels open, encouraging blood flow
  - c) blood and lymph flow work together
  - d) muscles and nerve paths are soothed.
- 10 Hot stones hold their heat for approximately:
 

a) 10 minutes	c) 20 minutes
b) 15 minutes	d) 30 minutes.



### Getting ready for assessment

All the practical assessments for this unit must be carried out with clients in the salon, in a realistic working environment setting, including the client paying for the treatment and it being carried out in a commercial time.

Your assessor will observe your performance on at least *four* separate occasions, each time on different clients. This should include *two* full body stone therapy treatments. Within the practical element of this unit you must also show that you have met the ranges expected for the types of stones in your assessment book and the use of *three* out of the *four* types.

Tip – when choosing your ranges think carefully about the types of stone you wish to use. Crystal therapy is regarded as a specialised in-depth subject in its own right, and you may feel you want to be a more experienced therapist before using crystals in your stone treatments.

You should be able to use all the equipment and adapt your treatment to suit the client's physical characteristics and meet all the treatment objectives listed in your ranges. However, the actual massage movements for the stones are not assessable and you can adapt your massage to suit the client and how comfortable you feel with both hot and cold stones. As with Swedish body massage, as long as the movements are recognisable and the assessors can see you have adapted the movements to suit the client, you will be considered competent. It would be good practice for you to have at least one male client and you could try to incorporate stones into treatments such as manicures and pedicures, or facials.

Never feel that if the assessor asks you a question it is a criticism or that you are doing something wrong – it is for clarification and they may not have been watching a particular movement or procedure.

The more you use the stones the more confident you will become under assessment conditions.