

Back Pain - Bernadette O'Donnell

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Client: Betty

Age: 29

Presenting Problem: Back, neck and shoulder pain as well as headaches, blurred vision and pins and needles in thumbs. She also suffers from sore arches.

Background: Year 6 teacher who has a busy schedule both at work and outside work and is also very much involved in sporting activities.

Observation of feet: Very dry skin on feet with a little hard skin on planter surface of feet in 1st and 5th metatarsal area.

Gait Analysis: Betty's gait flows easily and is not awkward. She had mildly supinated feet and after heel down, her calcaneus was slightly inverted.

Treatment Program 10 Treatments, 1 to 2 per week as required (approximately one hour per treatment)

1st Session - 7/12/97 Shoulder area and neck area felt quite gritty under my thumb as if there were crystal like accumulations there. She said she really felt it when I did the neck area of the great toe so I sedated that area for a while and I also did polarity linking in that area. Both great toes creaked when rotated and some of the minor ones also. The neck reflex, the shoulder reflex and the hip/back/sciatica reflex were quite tender and painful. She also suffered from planter fasciitis and found it very beneficial when I massaged and rubbed the arch area. I gave Betty some foot strengthening exercises to do and also advised her to drink lots of water.

2nd Session - 10/12/97 Did lots of joint mobilisation on all toe joints and concentrated on shoulder/neck/upper back area, while giving a good workout to eye and ear reflexes and cervical spine (esp. 6th and 7th cervical). Betty was very relaxed but a bit tired (after a big night out). I felt some little crystals in the lumbar area (sacrum and coccyx also) and also in the shoulder area. She enjoyed the slide technique and also lymphatic drainage at the end of the session. This time I also did some ear reflexology on her, paying particular attention to nervous system and spinal reflex. She enjoyed this and found it very relaxing. Betty said she was much more relaxed and sleeping better.

3rd Session - 13/1/98 Betty came to me on her way home from a touch footy match and was looking forward to having her feet "done" after all the running about! All joints were very mobile and both great toes clicked quite a bit on rotation. There was some tension in lower back, side of neck, and shoulder areas. I worked all systems and found the kidney and adrenal reflexes were tender. Bladder reflexes seemed a little puffy and she said she had drunk heaps of water earlier on in the evening. Her arches were a bit sore and she has seen a podiatrist in the past but he said it would not be worthwhile for her to wear orthotics because she is so active. She was still very relaxed and looking forward to having some work done around the house before the school holidays were over in a couple of weeks.

4th Session - 17/1/98 Betty was very relaxed and looking forward to the weekend even though she was still on summer holidays from school. Her feet were very relaxed and mobile, though her left one did seem to tense up occasionally. After a few relaxation techniques it relaxed instantly. The reflexes to the shoulders were very congested and Betty said she could feel them becoming looser as I worked on her feet. The reflex to the hip/back/sciatica was quite sore, as were the adrenals and the side of the neck. I did some polarity treatment between the solar plexus reflex and the 6th and 7th cervical and finished up with the Brazilian toe hold and lymphatic drainage. She said her right shoulder was stiffer than her left, but that her neck was much improved. I also worked the shoulder reflexes on Betty's hand and showed her how to do it at home between treatments.

5th Session - 20/1/98 Betty was relaxed and had just got her new orthopaedic bed so she was happy with that. She said she was sleeping better since the treatments started and her arches were not giving her as much pain. She did have mild stomach upset over the weekend so when I was giving the foot a thorough work out I did not put much pressure on the digestive reflexes. The reflex to the ileocaecal valve was quite tender so I just sedated it for a little while. The reflex to the side of the neck was also a bit tender but

seems to be improving and the hip/back/leg reflex was a little sore also. I did lots of joint mobilisation techniques and concentrated particularly on the head, cervical spine and shoulder areas as well as working the adrenals and other endocrine glands too. I finished treatment with lymphatic drainage and solar plexus hold.

6th Session - 24/1/98 Betty was content and enjoying the lovely summer weather we were having. She had just done a long walk and was happy that her arches had held up and caused her no pain. She felt that this was an improvement and said that reflexology had helped in that regard. She was still doing the foot strengthening exercises that I gave her and she drank lots of water every day. Both feet were very relaxed as was Betty. Reflexes to the shoulders were still congested, as was the sacral/coccyx reflex, but were not sore. The only sore reflex was the hip/back/sciatica and the side of the neck, which was only mildly so. Betty likes to talk during the sessions rather than remain quiet so I just listened. After giving both feet a complete workout I finished off with lymphatic drainage and solar plexus hold.

7th Session - 3/2/98 Betty liked reflexology and attended for treatment on her way home from a footy game. She was very responsive to the treatment and felt tension release and increased relaxation as I worked her feet. The right foot was more relaxed than the left, which was a bit rigid. Shoulder reflexes on both feet were very crunchy but she said they were not really painful. I did lots of relaxation techniques followed by lots of joint mobilisation. The great toes still clicked on rotation but not as much as previously. I finished treatment with lymphatic drainage and Brazilian toe hold. Her arches were much better and didn't feel as tight as they used to. She was doing her foot exercises and drinking lots of water. I also suggested that she practice some Alexander technique movement and demonstrated some movements to her.

8th Session - 10/2/98 Betty's feet were quite dry so I used lots of moisturiser cream and did lots of massaging. The left foot was not as relaxed as the right and there was some tension in the sacral and coccyx spine on the left foot. At the end of the treatment it was much more flexible. She feels the reason it is a bit rigid is because she broke that ankle some years ago. There were some crunchy bits on the reflex to the cervical spine and in the neck area on the right foot. Both shoulder reflexes had crystal like deposits there. The kidneys were quite tender but not alarmingly so. Both great toes and 5th toes creaked on rotation and the eye and ear reflex was a little sore. She said she had been sleeping much better since the treatment started. She always looked forward to the sessions and said her neck and shoulders were much more relaxed now compared to when she came for the first Reflexology treatment. I finished treatment with lymphatic drainage and solar plexus hold.

9th Session - 17/2/98 Betty was not as relaxed as usual. She had just lost a footy game and a 14 year old pupil of the school where she teaches committed suicide over the week-end. Both feet were quite rigid on rotation but did improve as the session went on. Both shoulder reflexes were extremely crunchy and there seemed to be a lot of tension there. There were also some crystal like deposits in the coccyx and sacral area of the lower back and also in the neck area. The kidneys were a little tender as were the reflexes to the eyes and ears. During the treatment I paid particular attention to the diaphragm and finished with lymphatic drainage followed by a long solar plexus hold.

10th Session - 21/2/98 This was Betty's last session but she wanted to continue for ever and ever! She really enjoyed reflexology. Her neck was much better and the reflex for it was not sore at all. There was still some congestion in the lower back region and also in the shoulders. Despite the fact that there were lots of crystal-like deposits in the shoulder region, the amount of congestion had decreased. The great toes clicked on rotation but were not sore. I finished treatment with lymphatic drainage, Brazilian toe hold and solar plexus hold. She felt much better since commencing the treatment and said it kept her injury free and pain free. Her arches were much better also and her whole body was coping much better with her sporting activity workload.

Treatment Results Betty is now a big fan of reflexology and said it has improved her well-being both physically and mentally. She feels much more relaxed after treatments and sleeps much better. She has not had to visit her chiropractor since she started treatment. She now looks on reflexology as a health maintenance therapy as well as a fixer of ailments therapy, as she feels that as well as curing her sore neck, reflexology has eliminated all the tension that was in the neck area and her foot arches are no longer sore. It is my option that in order to maintain the body and keep it pain and stress free, reflexology treatments

need to be continued on an ongoing basis or on a needs basis. Her shoulder reflexes have lots of crystalline deposit formations, which cause the reflexes to be tender and sensitive. As well as this factor being an indication of shoulder tension I feel that she carries her emotional tension here.