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Puttin' Our Foot Down on Reflexology

by *Linda Brockman*

Talk show legend Regis Philbin once said that reflexologist Laura Norman, who helped him with his kidney stones, was sent from God. The two met when Norman, author of *Feet First: A Guide to Foot Reflexology*, was on *Live!* with Regis and Kathie Lee. Philbin called her when his stones became impassable and surgery seemed inevitable.

“The mind is so powerful,” says Norman, who has offices in New York, Florida, and Massachusetts. At the hospital, she suggested Philbin visualize the stone breaking into little pieces. “I said, ‘You can dissolve it with your mind. See it breaking up and going through the ureter and out.’ I worked on his feet. He relaxed and fell asleep. In the morning, he passed the kidney stones.”



DIY: LIFT

You can easily give yourself (or a friend) a 10-minute lift anytime, anywhere. Sit in a comfortable position, in a quiet room. Using a light, absorbent, greaseless lotion, massage feet with squeezing, stroking, kneading, wringing motions. Massaging the feet is a great preparation for reflexology.

- **Hold ankle, heel, or toes** of one foot firmly in one hand.
- **Place thumb** of your other hand on the sole of the foot.
- **Apply steady**, even pressure with the outer edge or ball of the thumb (keeping it slightly bent at the joint) using a forward, caterpillar motion (“thumb walking”).
- **Press one spot**, move a little forward, press again, and so on.
- When you reach the toes, **return to the heel area**, pick a new spot, and **repeat the process**.
- **Continue** until the entire bottom of the foot has been worked. Then do the top of the foot using your fingers, a.k.a. “finger walking.”
- **Repeat** on the other foot.

In reflexology (dating back to around 2330 BC, Egypt), the feet, hands, face, and ears are a map of the body. With the thumb and fingers, a reflexologist applies alternating pressure to reflexes that correspond to areas on the body.



“Every part of your body is reflected in your hands and feet,” says certified reflexologist Chantel C. Lucier of Angel Feet in New York City. “That includes every organ, gland, system, and area of the body. I like to think of reflexology as the end points to all these areas. By applying pressure, you’re sending a message to the organ, system, or area experiencing pain or imbalance to relax and regain homeostasis.”

According to Kristen Kentner, who visits Lucier monthly: “It’s where I go when something doesn’t feel right. Chantel understands the points on the feet and how they affect the body.” Kentner, 40, has also noticed that her feet have gotten prettier—longer toes, milky complexion, and soft skin. Norman cites beautifying benefits like improved circulation, wrinkle dispersion, and hormonal balance.

Reflexology is also said to relieve stress and menopause, and boost energy. Norman uses visualization to invite healing. As a result, she claims she has helped clients lose weight, find partners, conceive babies, and sell houses. Do remember: Reflexology isn’t a substitute for medical care. “If we discover tension in an area of the foot,” says Norman, “we’ll communicate that to a client so they can talk to a doctor.”