



the consultation

Each issue we sit in on a health consultation. Here, **Aviva Ingram** receives an Indian Head Massage from the original guru

Subject: Aviva Ingram
Profession: Health Writer
Age: 26
Problem: Switching off at night



Arriving at the London Center of Indian Champissage - hot from my journey on the tube and frazzled from a busy day at work- I entered the therapy room with mental to-do list still running through my head. 'Compulsive thinking', as I call it, prevents me from nodding off at night, but I'd heard Indian Head Massage (IHM) could help with tension and sleeping problems. I hoped it could help me switch off and learn to enjoy my evenings again.

Indian Head Massage is hugely popular in the UK and is now growing in the US and Canada. I was certainly in good hands - my therapist was Narendra Mehta, who developed IHM in England after discovering in the 1970s that most full-body massages didn't extend above the neck. 'In India, touching the head is important because it houses the crown chakra (energy centre,' Narendra explained. 'At Indian weddings, the parents place their hands on the heads of the bride and groom to give them blessings and energy.' I'd heard a great deal about this guru so I was especially looking forward to my treatment!

Assessing the situation

Before my massage began, Narendra asked if I had any neck injuries, or suffered from headaches, and why I had decided to have this treatment. IHM therapists

can feel where you hold most tension, but it also helps them to know about any specific problems you want to address. Narendra explained that they use a set sequence but tailor the treatment to spend longer on areas that need more work.

The treatment

I was given the massage sitting upright in a chair, fully clothed and with my eyes shut. Narendra began by asking me to take three deep breaths before getting to work on my shoulders, upper back, neck and upper arms. When I made a few noises it was a bit on the tender side, he explained it would help reduce muscular tension. He managed to find every tension-holding nodule, relaxing each one in turn. While massaging my neck he soon located a problem area. Being an osteopath he was able to tell me I had a bone out of place, a possible cause of headaches. Narendra then moved on to the most relaxing part of the treatment, using various massage techniques on my scalp, face and even my ears. These including stroking, ruffling, tapping and tugging the hair and scalp. He finished by placing his hands on my throat, head and eyes to balance my Chakras. The therapy was finished in less than half an hour.

The conclusion

As soon as I opened my eyes, I felt profoundly relaxed (it was the final balancing work that did it) and little dozy-perfectly normal, according to Narendra. 'Most people will feel slightly sleepy for about 15 minutes after the massage,' he said. 'But they should then experience greater clarity and alertness.' I did feel extremely clear-headed on my journey home, yet still deeply relaxed. Best of all, that night and for the following two evenings, I had some of the best nights' sleeps I've had in a long time. I felt amazingly unaffected and able to detach from any worries. Small wonder, as Narendra had told me IHM helps to relax the brain.

The whole treatment was reassuring and comforting. It's amazing to think that such a short treatment can do all this. For more long-term results, a session every week for five or six weeks was recommended, and as and when I need some relief! I will definitely be coming here again.

What is Indian Head Massage?

Also known as Indian Champissage, Indian Head Massage combines the dry Massage of the shoulders, upper arms, neck, scalp, face and ears, along with energy balancing. It was developed by Narendra Mehta in 1981, based on the traditional form of Champi (head massage) which has been practised in India for more than 1,000 years. It's a wonderfully comforting therapy that can provide relief from aches and pains, stress symptoms, insomnia and even promote hair growth. A session with Narendra costs £25.00 for 30 minutes.

Call the London Center of Indian Champissage on 0207 609 3590 or visit www.indianchampissage.com, where you'll also find nationwide practitioners.