

A

Abhyanga

An Ayurvedic process. A deeply penetrating herbal oil massage that relaxes body and mind, breaks up impurities, and stimulates circulation of blood and lymph. Aids in detoxifying tissues and increase bodily awareness

Acai

Brazilian fruit, rich in nutrients and antioxidants used to prevent premature aging and promote cardiovascular health

Acid Mantle

The natural acidity of the skin and hair that helps prevent bacterial growth. Acne Vulgaris – Grade 3 acne, inflamed lesions and congestion

Acupressure

Traditional Oriental pressure-point massage used to increase the body's flow of energy

Acupuncture

Traditional Oriental healing methods based on Taoist philosophy; needles are inserted into specific points on the body for healing purposes

Actinic Keratosis

Precancerous growths that develop from reoccurring sun damage

Adjuvant Therapy

A treatment given in conjunction with the desired primary treatment in order to enhance the overall effectiveness of the primary treatment

Adrenal Gland

An endocrine gland located on top of the kidneys

Aesclepions

Greek healing centers named after the philosopher and healer, Aescleopios; these centers are thought to be evidence of ancient spa and healing techniques

Aerobics

Any sustained rhythmic exercise (walking, jogging, dancing) that uses the large muscle groups and increases the efficiency of the circulatory and respiratory systems

Aesthetic Medicine

Use of equipment, such as lasers, to remove scars and blemishes to leave skin looking youthful; administered by a medical professional within their scope of practice

Albino

A person with no pigment in eyes, hair, and skin

Algotherapy

A heated seaweed bath that is a form of thalassotherapy. The seaweed acts as an anti-inflammatory treatment and can reduce pain

Alkalarian

A person and/or diet that emphasizes use of alkaline food, drink, and lifestyle in order to maintain a balanced acid-alkaline body chemistry for optimal health and vitality

Alkali

A substance used to neutralize acids; capable of making soaps from fats

Alkaline

A non-acid substance, or base, with a pH greater than 7; usually contains above average amounts of sodium, potassium, magnesium, or calcium

Alopecia

Hair deficiency; baldness

Amenity or Resort Spa

A spa facility located within a resort or luxury hotel

Amino Acid

An essential building block of proteins.

Aminomethyl Propanediol

Substance used to adjust pH levels in cosmetics

Amonium Laureth/Sulfate

A detergent cleansing agent usually derived from coconut, said to be mild, gentle and effective

Anabolism

Constructive metabolism; the process of converting living matter to living substances

Anagen Phase

The early phase of the hair cycle wherein hair synthesis takes place

Anagen Stage

The critical and optimum stage to extract hair because it is the only stage that will provide permanent results of any sort

Anaphoresis

The process of forcing liquids into body tissues from the negative to positive pole

Androgen

Hormones that control the development of male characteristics; also the hormone that causes abnormal hair growth

Anerobics

Opposite of aerobic exercise, the body uses more oxygen than it takes in, such as in weightlifting or bodybuilding

Angioma

A tumor formed of lymphatics and blood vessels

Anidrosis

Perspiration deficiency

Anode

The positive portion of an electric force

Antibiotic

Substance produced by microorganisms that destroy or inhibit other competitive organisms

Antioxidant

Biochemicals that slow down free radicals by donating an electron.

Antiseptic

Chemical agent that prevents the growth of bacteria

Aquaerobics/Acquacize

Exercise using water resistance to strengthen and tone muscles.

Aqua Massage

Hydrotherapy technique in which a person is submerged in a tub of water and massaged by underwater jets, or hand held jets used by a therapist.

Aqueous

Pertaining to water, or watery

Arbutin

A natural skin lightening agent consisting of glucose and hydroquinone; derived from bearberry extract

Aromatherapy

Spa treatments, such as massage and body wraps that incorporate fragrant essential oils with various therapeutic benefits

Asanas

Yoga poses or postures

Asepsis

An absence of pathogenic bacteria

Ashiatsu

"Ashi" meaning "foot" and "atsu" meaning "pressure", in this luxurious deep tissue massage the therapist walks along the client's back

Aslan Therapy

Developed Dr. Ana Aslan of Romania as an anti-aging formula and procedure, using Gerovital H3 and Aslavital or Novocain

Ascorbic Acid

Vitamin C, an essential nutrient found mainly in fruits and vegetables; the body requires it to form and maintain bone, blood vessels, and skin, an organic compound

Asteatosis

An absence or deficiency of sebaceous secretions.

Astringent

Substance that dries or tightens the surface in on which it is applied

Atom

The smallest quantity of an element

Atomize

Reduce to a fine spray or minute particles

Atrophy

A process in which body tissues waste away due to lack of nutrients

Auricle

The external ear; also the upper cavities of the heart

Axilla

Under arm hair

Ayurveda

An Eastern Indian medicinal philosophy using herbal treatments and hot oils, combined with meditation, nutrition and aromatherapy to create an overall balance of self. The Ayurvedic body

functions, called doshas, consist of Vata, referring to blood, circulation, and healing; Pitta, referring to heat and metabolism; and Kapha, the structure of one's spiritual and philosophical self

Ayurvedic Massage

Similar to the Swedish massage, but with specially formulated fragrant oils, mixed specifically to a client's doshas

B

B-Lymphocytes

Immune system cells that produce antibodies

Balneotherapy

A therapeutic procedure using purified, mineral, or salt water to improve circulation and the immune system, and relieve various ailments, such as stress and arthritis.

Basal Cell Carcinoma

Cancer of the basal cell

Basti

An Ayurvedic herbal cleansing treatment designed to pull toxins from the colon

Benign

Mild; non-cancerous

Bentonite

Clay used as an absorbent in cosmetics

Benzophenones

Sunscreen used in cosmetics to combat UV rays

Beta-Carotene

A precursor that helps form retinol (vitamin A)

Biocatalyst

A substance, usually involving enzymes, vitamins or hormones, that modifies a physiological process

Bioenergetics

A system of therapy that combines breathing and body exercises, psychological therapy, and the free expression of impulses and emotions and that is held to increase well-being by releasing blocked physical and psychic energy

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Biofeedback

A process used to better understand human behavior in order to develop modification programs to promote well being. The process involves tracking physiological activities and habit patterns using electronic instruments, and recording the data in order to help people better understand their body and change any unwanted patterns

Bioflavonoid

Large range of substances containing many fruits and vegetables known to have strong antioxidants to fight cancer, and regulate gene activity

Blackhead

An open comedone; plug of sebaceous matter

Body Brushing

Dry brushing the skin to remove dead skin cells and stimulate circulation. Also called dry brushing

Body Composition Analysis

An evaluation process used to establish the percentage ratio of body fat to lean muscle; assists in determining individual nutrition and exercise programs.

Body Polishing – Use of various scrubs to exfoliate skin and remove dead skin cells and cleanse the body

Boil

Subcutaneous abscess

Borage Seed Extract

Contains anti-irritant and anti-inflammatory properties

Boreh

Balinese cleansing and exfoliating body treatment using herbs, seeds, grains, special oils and grated carrots to stimulate and increases circulation. Not recommended for pregnant women

Brush and Tone

Body brushing treatment followed by an application of hydrating oils or moisturizers to soften skin

Buffer

Solution that reacts with acids and bases to limit changes in pH

Bulla

Blister

C**Callous**

Skin that has thickened, usually on the feet and hands at points of pressure or friction

Cartilage

A non-vascular connective tissues; softer than bone

Catagen Phase

The transitional phase between hair growth and the inactive hair follicle phase

Catalyst

Substance that increases the yield of a chemical reaction without becoming part of the reaction product

Cataphoresis

The process of forcing medicinal substances into deep tissues using galvanic current from positive to negative

Cathodermie

Low-voltage electrical stimulation on the face; used to oxygenate the skin and invigorate circulation

Cell membrane

The membrane that surrounds the cytoplasm, through which substances pass in and out of the cell

Chair Massage

A brief backrub usually performed in a portable massage chair to relieve stress and increase well-being; common to workplace settings

Chakra

Ayurvedic for energy center. Many presume there are seven chakras that are all interconnected. When balanced, the physical, mental and spiritual aspects of "self" are in a state of harmony, contributing to a state of wellness and health

Chelation

A chemical compound in which metallic and nonmetallic, usually organic, atoms are combined; these compounds are characterized by a ring structure in which a metal ion is attached to two nonmetal ions by covalent bonds

Chemical Peel

Chemically removes the top layer of dried or damaged skin to reveal a more even texture and fresh skin layer

Chi-Kung

(see Qigong)

Chi Nei Tsang

A massage of the abdomen using circular strokes to alleviate bloating and constipation, and improve digestion

Cholesterol

A steroid alcohol sterol made by the liver and present in all animal cells; important to the body as a constituent of cell membranes, and is involved in the formation of bile acid and some hormones

Cilia

The eyelashes

Circuit Training

Exercise routine using weight training equipment that combines resistance with aerobics

Clay Wrap

Natural clay is applied to skin to remove toxins and ease muscle pain

Clinical Esthetician

A skin care specialist in a medical environment trained to work with skin ailments

Club Hair

Non-living hair that is detached from the lower part of the hair follicle, after telogen phase. (see also Telogen Phase)

Cold Plunge

Person is immersed in a pool of cold water after a sauna treatment to increase circulation

Collagen

The main connective tissue of the skin; responsible for strengthening skin

Colonic

The process of cleansing the colon of toxins with an enema developed specifically for the individual

Color Therapy

Based on the idea that certain color frequencies hold specific healing energy; applying certain color rays to various areas of the body may correct physical imbalances and promote healing. It is also believed that color induces mood changes in a person, for example increases or suppresses appetite, calming effects, etc.

Complementary Medicine

Non-traditional forms of medicinal treatments such as herbs, vitamins, and massage; used to relieve various maladies

Cones

A light-sensitive cell of one of the two types present in retina of the eye, responding mainly to bright light and responsible for color perception

Constitutive Skin Color

Natural skin color

Cortex

Middle layer of the hair shaft

Corundum

Extremely hard aluminum oxide, used as an abrasive; ruby and sapphire are varieties of Corundum

Cosmeceuticals

Cosmetic products that offer therapeutic benefits, such as nutrients and anti-aging elements, along with beautifying and enhancing the skin

Cosmetic Acne

Acne associated with the use of cosmetics and comedogenic ingredients; also known as cosmetica

Craniosacral Therapy

Massage therapy for the head and neck

Crenotherapy

Treatments incorporating vapor, mineral water, and mud

Cryoelectrophoresis

Technique for deep conveyance of frozen natural active substances through the skin, to reach a specific target, using electrical impulses

Cryogenic

Used to describe systems at very low temperatures

Cuticle

The tissue that connects the skin of the finger and the nail plate; also called eponychium

Cytology

The study of cells at the microscopic level

Cytoplasm

Living matter that surrounds the nucleus of a cell

D

Dancercise

Aerobic routine using dance

Day Spa

A facility offering a variety of spa treatments performed by trained professionals; salons that offer spa treatments are referred to as "Salon and Day Spa", "Spalon" or similar. Visitors can come for a few hours during the day. Overnight accommodations are not available

Dead Sea Mud Treatment

Detoxification and exfoliation process using mineral-rich mud from the Dead Sea

Dental Spa and/or Spa Dentistry

A facility whose dental program is run under the strict supervision of a licensed dentist. Services are provided that integrate both traditional and non-traditional dental and spa treatments (such as massage therapy, skincare and body treatments)

Dermabrasion

Procedure for smoothing skin by abrading the outer layer with a rotating metal wire

Dermal Epidermal Junction

The portion of the skin where the dermis and epidermis connect

Dermal Papilla

Contains capillaries that give nourishment to hair

Dermaplanting

Procedure for smoothing skin by shaving off the outer layer of the skin

Dermatosis

Any form of skin disease

Desquamation

Cellular renewal process of the epidermis

Destination Spa

An entire program of spa treatments laid out over the course of a few days. Overnight accommodations are available, and guests can participate in weight loss programs, exercise and healing treatments, along with the usual pampering. Guests at these facilities are all on a spa program, the only program that is being offered

Detoxification

The metabolic process by which the toxic qualities of a poison or toxin are reduced by the body

Dihydrotestosterone

Derivative of testosterone believed to be responsible for increased sebum production in the sebaceous glands

Dihydroxyacetone

A simple carbohydrate that is primarily use as an ingredients in sunless tanning products; often derived from plant sources such as sugar beets and sugar cane, by the fermentation of glycerin

Direct Current

An even, uninterrupted flow of current

Doshas

Refers to the three Ayurvedic body functions, consisting of Vata, referring to blood, circulation, and healing; Pitta, heat and metabolism; and Kapha, the structure of one's spiritual and philosophical self

Dulse Scrub

Exfoliating body treatment using dulse seaweed powder, hydrated with water or essential oils

Duo Massage

Synchronous massage treatment performed by two therapists on one person

Dysplastic Nevi

A mole with an atypical appearance

E

Edema

An excessive accumulation of serous fluid in tissue spaces or a body cavity

Electrologist

Somebody who removes moles, warts, or body hair by electrolysis

Endermologie

A French massage technique used to improve skin quality and define the figure by reducing the appearance of cellulite; performed by a trained esthetician, regular treatments recommended

Endothermic

Chemical reaction that absorbs heat

Effleurage

Quick, long massage strokes used in the beginning and end of the treatment

Electrolysis

Decomposing a chemical compound using electricity

Epilation

To remove hair by the root

Erythema

A redness, or blush, of the skin

Erythrocyte

Red blood cell

Esoteric

New Age massage-like therapy in which hands never touch the body. It is believed to balance energy fields

Essential Oils

An aromatic, liquid substance extracted from various plants used as part of a cosmetic or therapeutic treatment, such as aromatherapy

Esthetician

A skin care professional specializing in both health and beauty skin treatments

European Facial

A skin treatment that includes a deep cleansing facial, including the removal of white and black heads often through "manual squeezing", and massage of the face and shoulders to refine the skin; followed by a special hydrating masque

Exfoliation

The process of removing dead skin cells, while also improving circulation and increasing relaxation

Exothermic

Chemical reaction that gives off heat

Extrinsic Aging

Aging caused by the external environment; photo aging

F

Facial

A deep cleansing treatment of the face; often includes massaging, toning, steaming, exfoliating and moisturizing

Fascia

A fibrous connective tissue that surrounds and protects muscles and organs in the body

Facial Rejuvenation

Uses gentle, reflexology-type massage to relax facial muscles and freshen up your appearance. May temporarily reduce tension-induced wrinkles

Facultative Skin Color

Skin color enhanced by the sun

Fango Mud

Mineral-rich Italian grey mud used to detoxify and re-mineralize

Fango Therapy

Treatment using different types of mineral-rich mud to exfoliate the skin and remove toxins from the body through pores

Fatty Acid

An acid made from the saturated portions of open chains of hydrocarbons

Fibroblast

A cell that makes connective tissue, such as collagen

Finish Sauna

A dry heat chamber designed to open pores to release toxins wherein water is poured over hot rocks, combined with aromatherapy - usually pine - and a cold treatment, such as rolling in the snow, to close pores and increase circulation. Not recommended for patients with high blood pressure or heart conditions (see also Sauna)

Fitzpatrick Scale

A scale developed in 1975 by Harvard Medical School dermatologist, Thomas Fitzpatrick; classifies a person's complexion and their tolerance of sunlight; used by many practitioners to determine how someone will respond or react to facial treatments

Flotation Tank

A relaxation and stress reduction treatment using a tank filled with enough salt water so a person can float effortlessly; often times, light and music therapies are used to enhance the process

Food and Drug Administration

The national regulatory system that is responsible for the safety and purity of food, drugs and cosmetics

Free Fatty Acid

Inflammatory byproduct formed within the follicle when bacteria digest sebum

Free Fatty Acids

Irritating byproduct formed by the breakdown of tricyclerides

Free Radical

Any molecule or atom that has at least one unpaired electron, and can exist independently

Fulling

A massage movement wherein the patient's limbs are rolled back and forth between the therapist's hands

G

Garshan

Dry skin brushed with either a silk or wool glove. Enhances circulation and exfoliates skin, preparing body for subsequent oil or herbal treatments

Glycerol

Byproduct of the breakdown of the of the triglyceride portion of sebum that bacteria feed on

Glycosaminoglycans (GAGS)

Large molecules in the dermis that contain sugar and protein that help keep the skin moist

Gommage

Creams applied to the body in long strokes, (if to the face, use short, quick strokes) to cleanse and hydrate the skin

H**Hacking**

A massage stroke made by a chopping motion with the side of the hand

Hair Bulb

The lower extremity of the hair

Hair Density

The number of hairs per square inch of the body or scalp

Hair Folicle

The portion of the skin containing the hair root

Hair Root

The portion of the hair within the follicle

Hair Shaft

The segment of the hair that grows beyond the skin

Hammam

Turkish/Middle Eastern steam bathhouse

Hatha Yoga

System of yoga that focuses on physical exercise to gain control of the body.

Hospital Spas – Spas located on site in hospitals designed to assist in the healing and comfort of patients. Often combined with Women's Health Clinics

Henna (Middle Eastern)/Mehndi (Indian/Pakistani)

A natural plant substance decoratively applied to women as part of a ritual or ceremony, such as marriage. Henna is mixed with a liquid, and elaborate patterns are painted on various body parts, such as hands and feet

Herbal Wrap

This detoxification process involves herb-soaked linen sheets wrapped tightly around the body for about 30 minutes. The person is covered with a blanket and has a cold compress applied to the forehead. Not recommended for those with heart conditions, high blood pressure, or pregnant women

Herbalism

A health alternative to treating certain ailments with plants and plant extracts

Hirsuete

Coarse long hair

Hirsutism

Reference to masculine-like hair on a woman's face or body

Holistic Medicine

Similar to herbalism, or all natural treatments, it also incorporates other forms of non-traditional techniques, focusing on the relationship of being one with all elements

Homeopathy

A form of medicine where patients are treated with natural substances, in miniscule doses, to create similar symptoms to those of the disease being treated; a practicing physician is called a Homeopathic M.D

Homogeneous

Of uniform nature or quality

Hormones

Substances that regulate growth and metabolism

Hot Stone Massage

Technique using smooth, warm stones applied with pressure, in strokes, or rested on the body

Hydrocarbon

Compound composed of hydrogen and carbon

Hydrocortisone

Hormone produced by adrenals that can also be created synthetically. Anti-inflammatory benefits, but prolonged use can destroy collagen and cause skin fragility

Hydrophilic

Compounds that dissolve easily in water and usually have a positive or negative charge; "water loving"

Hydrophobic

Compounds that do not dissolve easily in water, such as oil; "water fearing".

Hydrotherapy

Therapy using fresh spring water. (see also Balneotherapy)

Hydrotub

Jetted tub used in various hydrotherapy procedures

Hypoallergenic

Term used to state a product will not cause an allergic reaction or sensitivity to the skin

Hyponychium

The junction between the nail plate and the fingertip; provides a waterproof barrier

Hypothalamus

The portion of the brain that regulates the metabolic process; strongly influences the pituitary gland

I**Impaction**

Clogged pore

Indian Head Massage

Massage of scalp and neck to relieve tension

Inflammation

Redness, pain, swelling, and heat caused by the body's reaction to irritation

Infrared

Of or relating to the range of invisible radiation wavelengths from about 750 nanometers, just longer than the red in the visible spectrum, to 1 millimeter, on the border of the microwave region

Inhalation Therapy

Treatments involving the inhalation of steam; may be enhanced with medicine or natural herb substances. The process is used for respiratory, pulmonary or sinus related ailments

Interferons

Proteins produced by white blood cells that help the body fight against disease; manufactured forms are often used to build cancer patients' immune systems

Intrinsic Aging

Aging due to genetic composition

Ionization

A form of thalassotherapy using salt water that has been ionized with negative ions, may be sprayed on or inhaled

Ionophoresis

Passing direct current electricity through a particular part of the body between two electrodes, one of which is made of a simple piece of conductive material and the other being made of a small sponge soaked with a aqueous solution of the substance to be introduced to the body through the skin in the form of ions

J

Japanese Enzyme Bath

Wooden tub filled with fibrous material (such as wood chips) and plant enzymes that naturally ferment to create a heated substance. Person is submerged in the mixture to sweat out toxins. Stimulates metabolism and increases relaxation. Treatment time should not exceed one hour

Japanese Facial

Facial energizing technique used to stimulate acupuncture points on the face and scalp; believed to help keep youthful appearance

Javane Lulur Treatment

A traditional Indonesian prenuptial treatment combining massage, exfoliation, and bathing

K

Kapha

An Ayurvedic body function meaning the structure of one's spiritual and philosophical self. (see also Doshas)

Keloid

An overgrowth of fibrous tissues; a scar

Keratin

A protein that is the main constituent of the skin, hair, and nails

Kinesitherapy

Treatment involving passive or active movements of body parts in order to tone muscles and enhance circulation; also known as physiotherapy

Kneipp Baths

In this therapeutic healing process, herbal or mineral baths are used in conjunction with nutrition and exercise. Changing between hot and cold baths is a vital healing element in this process. Developed in Germany by Father Sebastian Kneipp

L

Laconium

Dry heat chambers used prior to some treatments to open pores and detoxify the skin; often used with cold packs or plunge pools

Laser

Acronym: Light Amplification by Stimulated Emission or Radiation; produces a concentrated beam of light that can dissolve tissue and is used in surgery and hair removal, especially on small or tender areas

Laser treatments

Treatments performed by medical professional using lasers to reduce blemishes, wrinkles or other imperfections of the skin and body

Lentigo

A freckle

Leucoderma

Abnormal white patches on the skin

Light Therapy

Exposes skin to controlled ultraviolet light in order to treat various skin conditions

Lipase

Enzyme involved in splitting tricyclerides into glycerol and fatty acids

Lomi-Lomi

Hawaiian body treatment that uses long and expansive massage strokes in a rocking motion; therapists may occasionally walk on patients' backs to enhance the massage treatment

Loofah Scrub

The dried sponge from the loofah plant is used as a tool in massage to exfoliate dead skin cells and improve circulation

Lulur

Indonesian body treatment usually involving massage, exfoliation using spices, grains and seeds, followed by a hot shower in order to open the pores. The patient is then covered with yogurt and sent to soak in a soothing bath of flower petals and essential oils

Lunula

The semi-circular, white shape at the base of the nail

Lymph Drainage

Lymphatic system massage treatment to reduce water retention, increase circulation and drain toxins from the body

M

Mandi Susu

Indonesian bath using milk, buttermilk, or yogurt

Marine Hydrotherapy

A form of thalassotherapy using water jets to massage and reduce pain, and increase circulation

Matrix

The formative part of the nail

Medical Esthetician

Skin care specialist who works with a physician in a medical setting, usually before and after cosmetic surgery

Medical Massage

Therapeutic massage applied to painful areas to release trapped muscles or to counter ischemia, a condition in which the blood doesn't flow properly to the muscles

Medical Spa

A spa that includes medical therapeutic treatments along with the customary spa treatments. A doctor or other health care professional must oversee all medical treatments. Many doctors, such as plastic surgeons and dermatologist are offering spa treatments to aid in their patients' healing processes and comfort levels. According to the International Medical Spa Association: A medical spa is a facility that operates under the full-time, on-site supervision of a licensed health care professional. The facility operates within the scope of practice of its staff, and offers traditional, complementary, and alternative health practices and treatments in a spa-like setting. Practitioners working within a medical spa will be governed by their appropriate licensing board, if licensure is required

Meditation

A form of concentration usually focused around breathing, relaxation, clearing one's thoughts and becoming one with the inner and outer self

Mehndi (see Henna)

Melanin

Pigment in the skin

Melanocyte

The cell that produces melanin

Melanogenesis

Synthesis of melanin

Melanoma

A type of skin cancer found in the cells that produce pigment. This cancer can be deadly and is often caused by overexposure to the sun, especially during childhood and teenage years

Melanosomes

The membrane packet that contains melanin

Melasma

Pigmentation of the face, most commonly on the malar area(the upper cheek), bridge of the nose, forehead, and upper lip, that occurs in half of women during pregnancy; birth control pills can cause melasma; hormone therapy after menopause does not cause the condition

Mesotherapy

A series of nutraceutical injections to the middle layer (mesoderm) of the skin to dissolve fat and reduce cellulite. Mesotherapy is a non-invasive procedure that must be administered by a medical professional

Microcomedone

Tiny comedone, naked to the visible eye, but felt within the hands

Mitosis

Process of cell division

Morphology

Massage focused on specific digestive areas in order to improve digestion and eliminate waste. Specialized training required

Mud

Nutrient-rich mud compounds used in various spa treatments to exfoliate and rejuvenate skin. Usually contains therapeutic minerals that claim to have detoxifying and healing effects to aid in the relief of ailments such as rheumatism, inflammation of nerves, etc.

Myofascial Release

Various massage techniques dedicated to smoothing away knots in the fascia – connective tissues that hold muscles together. The best way to smooth fascia knots is through Rolfing, which can be painful

N

Nail Bed

The skin beneath the nail

Nail Folds

The skin that frames the nail around three sides

Nail Plate

The visible part of the nail

Nasya

Specifically prescribed herbs and oils are inhaled through the nose. Clears sinuses and helps relieve nasal passage dryness

Naturopathy

Natural healing procedures and medicines using natural substances, such as flowers and plants

Neuromuscular

Finger pressure is applied to pressure points. Similar to shiatsu in feel, but more focused on relieving pain; used for breaking cycles of muscle spasms

Nevus

A non-cancerous growth on the skin

NIA (Neuromuscular Integrative Action)

Exercise routine combining yoga, martial arts and various dance steps

Nutraceuticals

Skin care formulas using food ingredients for their natural revitalizing materials, such as pineapple enzymes, or exfoliation products containing nuts or seeds

O

Oleation

Ayurvedic treatment combining friction massage and blended essential oils

Omega-3

A long-chain polyunsaturated fatty acid with a double bond at the third carbon; sources: fish oils, seeds and whole grains; used for prevention of such conditions as high cholesterol, heart disease, and arthritis

Onsen

A natural Japanese mineral thermal spring

Organelle

Part of a cell

Oshandhi

Warm, moist herbal wrap using dosha-specific oils. Calms and relaxes the physiology, while encouraging the elimination of toxins

Oxidation

The process of an atom or molecule losing an electron; adding oxygen to a substance

Oxygen Facial

Facial treatment using oxygen and various nutrients (spray or topical application) to revitalize collagen levels in the skin in order to enhance youthfulness

Oxygenate

Cleansing and revitalizing facial skin using pure oxygen. Regular treatments can reduce premature aging

Ozokerite

Mineral used as a thickening agent in cosmetics, especially lipsticks and stick foundations

P**P. Acnes**

Bacteria associated with the sebaceous follicle

Panchakarma

Ayurvedic purification treatments incorporating essential oils, massage and meditation

Parafango

A treatment incorporating paraffin and mineral-rich volcanic mud. See also Fango Therapy

Paraffin

Warm, melted wax enriched with hydrating substances such as menthol and essential oils

Paraffin Wrap

Melted paraffin wax is brushed on to help relax muscles and soften skin

Parcours

An outdoor trail that contains various exercise stations of increasing difficulty along the way. Trail is usually less than 2 miles; also spelled parcours or called vitacourse

Papule

Pimple; small -circumscribed elevation on the skin containing no fluid

pH Level

Measurement of the degree of acidity or alkalinity of a solution of a scale of 1 -14 with anything below 7 being acidic and anything over 7 being alkaline

Photo-aging

Includes sun damage, fine lines, and discoloration

Physiochineseitherapy

Therapy incorporating heat, light, electrical and mechanical movements to rejuvenate strength and flexibility

Phytotherapy

A system of Western herbal medicine, combining tradition with science

Pilates

Strength training and conditioning program Invented by Dr. Joseph Pilates of Germany. It uses specialized stretches to tone muscles, often performed on Pilates equipment or floor mats

Pilo–Sebaceous Unit

Unit comprised of the follicle, the hair and the sebaceous gland

Piloga

An exercise routine combining Pilates and yoga

Pinda Swedana

Deep massage using rice boiled in milk and herbs. Relaxing, rejuvenation, and detoxifying

Pitta

Term for one of Ayurvedic body functions, referring to heat and metabolism. (see also Doshas)

Pituitary Gland

The hormone-secreting gland found at the base of the brain that regulates hormones

Pizichilli

A continuous stream of warm herbal oil is poured over the body as two therapists gently massage

Plunge Pools

Two pools filled with hot and cold water revitalize circulation as the person immerses themselves in each, alternating hot and cold. Also known as Roman pools

Polarity Massage

Massage technique to promote balance of energy in the body; often incorporates gentle rocking motions. Developed by Dr. Randolph Stone

Polysaccharide

A sugar, such as glycogen, starch and cellulose; carbohydrate composed of many monosaccharide units

Polypeptide

A molecule made of many joined amino acids

Prolotherapy

An irritant solution is injected into soft tissues, such as ligaments or tendons, to promote healing in the area

Pus

Fluid product of inflammation, consisting of a liquid containing white blood cells, dead cell debris and tissue elements

Pustule

Pus filled lesion raised above the surface of the skin

Q**Qigong**

Chinese exercise focusing on breathing and body movements to increase energy, balance and overall health. Also spelled Chi Kung

R**Radon Therapy**

European spa Treatment involving an inert natural gas believed to stimulate organ functions and improve gland secretions without harmful effects of radiation

Rakata Mokshana

Traditionally, blood letting. Today this step is often used to cleanse the blood using herbs

Rassoul

Found in Morocco, this mineral-rich mud-like compound is used to revitalize and condition hair, and exfoliate facial skin

Rassoul Chamber

This treatment is designed for couples. Each is placed on heated porcelain and affectionately applies rassoul mud to their partner. The setting of soothing music and romantic lighting is used to stimulate emotion as the mud dries

Rasul

Body treatment beginning with a warm shower using seaweed soap, followed by mud application, and completed with an herbal steam bath

Rebirthing

A yoga breathing technique used with guided meditation to clear the mind

Reflex

An involuntary and immediate response to a stimulus

Reflexology

Shiatsu-like finger pressure is applied to pressure points on the hands and feet, which are believed to correspond to all glands and organs in the body. Used for relieving tension and improving circulation; also performed on the earlobes

Reiki

An ancient Japanese massage technique wherein the therapist uses stationary palm positioning and pressure to relieve specific tension points

Retention Hyperkeratosis

Newly formed cells accumulating and retained in a thickening layer along the follicle wall

Reticular Dermis

The portion of the dermis containing most of the connective tissue; located above the adipose layer of the skin

Rhodopsin

A reddish light sensitive pigment found in rod cells of retina

Rods

A light-sensitive cell of one of the types present in larger numbers in the retina of the eye, responsible mainly for monochrome vision in poor light.

Rolfing

System developed by biochemist Ida Rolf, designed to improve energy flow and relieve stress through deep manipulation of muscles, bones and joints; can be painful due to deep muscle manipulation

Roman Bath

Developed in ancient Rome, a whirlpool bath alternating warm, hot and cold water to improve circulation

Rosen Method

It is said that "the body remembers all of life's traumas," meaning experiences and memories are stored in the body in the form of stress, causing chronic muscular tension and pain. By meeting the tension with gentle hand pressure, monitoring the breathing and asking questions, the practitioner facilitates the release of stress and locked-up memories

Russian Steambath

Sauna-like chambers designed to treat the body with steam, heat and water. Alternating between hot and cold, massages are given in the chambers with oak leaf branches soaked in hot soapy water

S

Salt Glow

Rubbing coarse salt over the body to remove dead skin cells; often incorporates circular or long strokes to exfoliate and improve circulation. Not suitable for clients with high blood pressure or heart conditions

Sauna

A heated wooden room with benches for sitting as the dry heat opens pores and allows toxins to sweat out. It is recommended that it be followed by a cold shower or cold plunge to close pores. The process may be repeated. (see also Finnish Sauna)

Sciatic Nerve

The nerve that runs down the back of the thighs

Scotch Hose

Water treatment using pressurized hoses on specific pressure points on the body, while alternating hot and cold water to relieve tension and improve circulation

Seaweed Wrap

A wrap incorporating seaweed and nutrient-rich marine algae

Shiatsu

Japanese acupressure massage technique; pressure applied with fingers, hands, elbows and feet

Shiro-Abahyanga-Nasya

Combines deep head, neck and shoulder massage with a facial lymphatic massage, followed by the inhalation of aromatic steam and a nasal and sinus Nasya with herbal nose drops; balances and alleviates most head, neck and respiratory disorders

Shiro Dhara

Ayurvedic treatment in which warm oil is gently poured over the center of the forehead and tenderly massaged into hair and scalp

Shortwave

A type of high-frequency current used to permanently remove hair

Siddha Vaidya

Ayurvedic medical treatment using plant substances to balance a person's dosha. See also Kapha, Pitta, Vata

Silicone-Based Primer

Applied after using moisturizer and sunscreen and locks the two in; protects skin from the sun, wind, and other environmental pollutants that are in the air; aids in slowing down weathering and aging of skin; fills the fine lines and crevices; helps maintain a protective barrier for the skin and still allows a natural, smooth texture (stein)

Sodium Hydroxide

Lye, an alkaline ingredient used to modify pH of a formula. Also used as a cleansing agent

Soft Pack System/Dry Floatation

Patient sinks into a dry waterbed while wrapped in heated mud or herbal applications

Solvent

Large group of ingredients, including water, used to dissolve or break down other ingredients in a formula. Also used to degrease skin and reduce sebum

Sound Therapy

Using soothing sounds and tones to promote healing and the realignment of body rhythms

Spa

1. A Belgian town where Roman soldiers discovered the healing elements of the towns' mineral springs.
 2. A center for relaxation, rejuvenation, exercise, and various treatments (often involving massages, skin treatments, etc.) Various types of spas exist, including:
 - AMENITY SPA or RESORT SPA - A spa facility located within a resort or luxury hotel.
 - DAY SPA - A facility offering a variety of spa treatments performed by trained professionals; salons are often included. Visitors can come for a few hours during the day. Overnight accommodations are not available.
 - DESTINATION SPA - An entire program of spa treatments laid out over the course of a few days. Overnight accommodations are available, and guests can participate in weight loss programs, exercise and healing treatments, along with the usual pampering. Guests at these facilities are all on a spa program, the only program that is being offered.
 - MEDICAL SPA - A spa that includes medical therapeutic treatments along with the customary spa treatments. A doctor or other health care professional must oversee all medical treatments. Many doctors, such as plastic surgeons and dermatologist are offering spa treatments to aid in their patients' healing processes and comfort levels. According to the International Medical Spa Association: A medical spa is a facility that operates under the full-time, on-site supervision of a licensed health care professional. The facility operates within the scope of practice of its staff, and offers traditional, complementary, and alternative health practices and treatments in a spa-like setting. Practitioners working within a medical spa will be governed by their appropriate licensing board, if licensure is required.
 - HOSPITAL SPAS - Spas located on site in hospitals designed to assist in the healing and comfort of patients. Often combined with Women's Health Clinics.
 - WELLNESS CENTER - Owned by physicians or entrepreneurs - and encompass many of the same services as the medical/hospital facilities if physician owned. If privately owned, facilities will have a licensed healthcare professional as Medical Director.
- Spa Cuisine - Food served at a spa often consists of fresh fruits, vegetables, fish and whole grains to provide natural low-calorie and low-fat meals.
- Spinning - Stationary bicycle routine guided by an instructor. A video projection is often used to portray soothing scenes associated with outdoor cycling.
- Sports Massage - Massage done to relieve tension and specific muscle tightness caused by sports or other strenuous activities; often involves deep tissue massage strokes

Squamous Cell Carcinoma

Cancer of the cells that make up the outer layer of the skin or epidermis; appear like fish scales

Steam Room

Similar to a sauna, this room provides hot steam to open pores in order for toxins to exit the body

Step Aerobics

Aerobic exercise routine involving rhythmic stepping on and off a platform that is three or more inches high

Stratum

Tissue layers

Stretch Marks

Streaks or stripes on the skin, specially on the abdomen, caused by distension of the skin from obesity or during pregnancy

Subcutaneous

Under the skin

Surfactant

Substance that tends to reduce the surface tension of a liquid in which it is dissolved

Sun Protection Factor

Often referred to as SPF; the rating for sunscreens. Recommended SPF 15 or higher

Sweat Lodge

A natural sauna made of heated rocks inside a mud hut, attributed to the Native American Indians. (see also sauna)

Swedana

An herbal steam treatment that reduces tension and releases toxins through the skin

Swedish Massage

Developed in the late 19th century by Par Henrik Ling in Stockholm, this massage involves kneading, firm stroking and tapping of pressure points; lotions or oils are often used for lubrication

Swiss Shower

A multi-jet shower that alternates hot and cold water to relieve tension and improve circulation. Typically used after mud treatments or wraps

Sympathetic Nervous System

The system that controls involuntary muscles, affecting respiration, circulation and digestion

T

T-Cell

A lymphocyte that fights off unfamiliar invaders in the body

Tactile Corpuscle

Nerve endings within the skin

Tai Chi

Ancient Chinese martial arts involving slow, graceful movements while focusing on relaxed breathing and concentration

Thalamus

Either of the masses of grey matter lying between the cerebral hemispheres on either side of the third ventricle, relaying sensory information and acting as center for pain perception

Telogen Phase

The last phase in the hair cycle wherein the hair rests in the follicle until it is shed and the cycle begins again

Telomeres

The ends of chromosomes; involved in replication and stability of DNA

Temazcal

Aztec sweat lodge, dark, brick or stone filled with intense heat and steam to detoxify the body, while the dark relaxes the mind

Terminal Hair

The soft, long hair found on the legs, arms and scalp

TEWL

Trans Epidermal Water Loss; dehydration, or loss of water from the skin

Thai Massage

The therapist uses deep tissue and acupressure massage, along with yoga positioning as the patient lies on a floor mat. This massage helps align the skeletal system, ease muscle stiffness and promote relaxation

Thalassotherapy

From the Greek term "thalassa" or sea. Hydrotherapy treatment using fresh sea water and mineral-rich marine products that have curative properties

Thermal

Heat, wet and dry

Toxins

Metabolic waste from the body

Trager Massage

Massage technique using gentle rhythmic rocking motions in order to relax the body and relieve tension from joints. Developed by Dr. Milton Trager

Translucent

Allowing light, but not detailed images, to pass through; semitransparent

Trichosis

Abnormal hair growth

Triclosan

Broad based antibacterial agent used in many products

Triglyceride

Fat substance, making up about 50% of sebum

Tui Na

Asian bodywork technique that combines the use of acupressure and massage to balance energy and flush toxins from the body

Tumor

An abnormal mass tissue that is a result of excessive cell division; they are not functional, and may or may not be cancerous

Tyrosinase

An enzyme that converts tyrosine into melanin

U

Udvardina

A deeply penetrating and exfoliating herbal paste massage. Conditions the skin while stimulating lymph and detoxifying the tissues

Ultra Sound

A therapy performed by a physical therapist or chiropractor using high-frequency sound waves in order to alleviate pain caused by injuries to the body. The frequency probe often incorporates heat into the process as well

Underwater Massage

A massage performed with various water pressure jets while a person is submerged in water. (see also Aqua Massage)

UV Index

A measurement of the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays.

V

Vacuomobilization

A technique developed in France to improve skin conditions, such as wrinkles, scars or sagging, using suction cups of various strengths and sizes

Vata

Term for one of three Ayurvedic body functions, referring to blood, circulation, and healing. (see also Doshas)

Vamana

Vomiting therapy used to eliminate toxins from stomach and thoracic cavity; rarely used

Vellus

The fine, light-colored hair found everywhere on the body except the palms and soles

Vibrissae

Nostril hair; should not be treated with electrolysis

Vichy Shower

A cushioned mat or table with water jets suspended over head; often used in various treatments to rinse the body of mud, oils or other remnants, while also improving circulation

Vishesh

Deep muscular massage to improve circulation and break up knots within the muscle spindles

Vitamin

An organic molecule or substance – other than carbs, lipids, or proteins – that cannot be produced by the body

W-Z

Watsu

A relaxing massage treatment performed in a warm pool of water, combining shiatsu and deep tissue massage along with stretches to relieve stiffness

Waxing

Hair removal treatment using hot or cold wax

Wellness Centers

Owned by physicians or entrepreneurs - and encompass many of the same services as the medical/hospital facilities if physician owned. If privately owned, facilities will have a licensed healthcare professional as Medical Director

Wen

A sebaceous cyst usually found on the scalp

Whirlpool

A heated pool with high-pressured jets that circulate water. Jets are often focused on pressure points in order to reduce joint stiffness and muscles aches

Whitehead

Closed comedone

Yoga

Toning the body through various stretches and postures Involves controlled breathing and concentration that improves circulation, strength and flexibility. (see also Asanas)