

10 Things your Massage Therapist Wants you to Know.



Being an RMT (Registered Massage Therapist), you see all kinds of people, conditions and concerns.

From routine, to severe, to weird, to even funny. In my practice, I've started to see some common reoccurrences emerge. After consulting some colleagues of mine, they seem to have noticed a few patterns too. So, I've compiled 10 points that stick out the most.

Common concerns, incidents and what your RMTs are really thinking! Here are 10 things your RMT wants you to know:

1. That's probably normal.

Is this normal? My ___ does this. My _____ has that. Outside of orthopaedic concerns, you would be surprised what patients ask their RMTs. Do other people have hair there? My skin has cellulite there, is that normal? As regulated health care professionals, we do our best to answer your questions within our scope of practice, and if you are really concerned, go to see your Doctor (we will probably refer you if we are concerned, too). But, more than likely, it's normal.

2. *It really doesn't matter that you haven't shaved.*

Seriously. We truthfully don't even notice, up until you mention it. It has no effect on our treatment, if it does, that's what the oil and lotion is for. I mean it.

3. *Do your stretches.*

And your exercises, and your hydrotherapy, and your home care, and...you see where I am going here right? Although it would be fun to follow you around, give you treatment and remind you of your therapeutic exercises all day long, we can't. Our time together is very short, minutes a day, a week, a month, or even longer.

This homework RMTs are giving you, is designed along your treatment plan to help you resolve your pain and dysfunction. Your health is in your hands the rest of those minutes, days, weeks, and months. If you want to get better, you need to do your homework.

4. *Your body is beautiful, too.*

RMTs treat hundreds of patients. That means seeing, and touching, their naked bodies. Guess what? They are all different. Out of all of them, not even one looks like what you see, airbrushed in the media. Male or female. A few have come close, but no cigar.

It breaks our hearts a little bit when we see those patients insecure about their bodies, because of the pressure of the media. It's not often the media shows the stretch marks, scars, deformities, muscles, moles, dry skin or cellulite. that we so often see on...everyone. Those images aren't what we see on a daily basis.

There is only one condition your body should be in, male or female, young or old: *healthy*. And that looks a little different for everyone. Your RMT is here as a vessel for health. We are not here to judge. And we want to tell you: Your body is beautiful, just how it is, as long as you are on your journey to health.

5. *When you "re-make" the table, I smile inside.*

Post treatment, when we come in for reassessment, check ins, clean ups, etc. And we see that all of the linens have been attempted to be put back, tidied and re-made, it warms our hearts. I mean, it's silly really, they all go off to be sterilized and sanitized. It's completely unnecessary, but it's also really sweet for some funny reason.

6. *Don't call us "masseuses."*

We are Registered Massage Therapists. With years of training, education then certification, experience and legal responsibilities. The word masseuse is...ugh. Shudder-worthy. It's associated with under-the-table, sketchy, "happy ending" type massage. And that is *not* what we do. RMT's provide well thought out, research based treatment plans to assist our patients return-to or maintenance-of health. Please call us by our hard earned titles. Registered Massage Therapist, Massage Therapist, or simply, RMT.

7. *Don't be shy about your butt.*

In our world, it's a large muscle, actually it's three. We call your bum gluteals or glutes. It's not a booty or ass and we don't see it as fat, tiny, jiggly or bony. We observe your bodies in a clinical sense, and if you have pain associated with your low back, legs, hips or glutes, don't be shy. We're here to help, let us know!

8. *...But, please, don't undrape yourself.*

As RMTs we are legally required to follow draping protocols to protect you and ourselves. We only undrape the area being treated at that time, then redrape fully, before undraping any other areas. Please keep yourself covered. And no, we are not interested in seeing your bits (see number six if you need clarification of what we do).

9. *Bodily functions are normal.*

Most massage therapy treatments have some component of relaxation. Your parasympathetic nervous system starts to shine, meaning the rest-and-digest functions are in gear. And yes, that means stomach grumbling and growling,

snoring, even passing gas are normal. It doesn't happen all the time, but when it does, that's a good sign you are relaxed. As healthcare professionals, it doesn't faze us. We don't judge you, we're here to help you.

10. We care.

Yes, we actually care if you do your home care. Yes, it really matters what you tell us and how you are feeling. And yes, even though we shouldn't, we worry about you when you're struggling. Your success is our success.

We hope we can make it better, that's the goal, that's why we do what we do. That's also why RMTs refer you to other practitioners, because we truly think they could help and their tools could be of use to your recovery. Because your recovery is our priority and you matter to us. And most importantly, because we really care about you and your health.

Next time you see your RMT, keep these 10 points in mind.

Know that we love what we do, helping people is the best job in the world. We truly feel just as good as you do after a rockstar treatment! We are genuinely grateful when you consider trusting us with your health, and we consider it a privilege to share that time with you!