Top Tips for Lichens Sclerosus, Vulvodynia and Endometriosis

A little bit about us…

*At ANA therapies we specialise in Visceral therapy and Women’s/Men’s Pelvic Health.*

*Visceral therapy is the gentle mobilisation of the internal organs, working to release adhesions, restrictions and optimising blood flow and lymphatics.*

*Within Women’s Health we treat a variety of issues like Bladder urgency/frequency, leaking, period pains, Vulvodynia, Vaginal Prolapses, Endometriosis, Adenomyosis, Fertility, Pain during intercourse, Lichens Sclerosus, Mummy MOT post-natal assessment, Mastitis, Diastasis (tummy Separation) and much more.*

*Within Men’s Health we treat issues like Pain with Urination, Pain with intercourse, testicular pain, pelvic girdle pain, constipation and more.*

More about Visceral Therapy…

*With the visceral therapy we can treat infertility, for example, working on structures like the uterus and broad ligaments that are restricted and being inhibited from descending to receive the sperm.  In turn, working on the reproductive organs in this gentle way, encouraging their normal pendulum movements, also encourages regulation of hormones.*

*Visceral therapy also works with structures such as the bowels, liver, stomach and the diaphragm. Tapping into the parasympathetic nervous system (the rest and digest system) in this way can be very powerful and produce fantastic outcomes for the client which lasts.*

*There are many routes of treatment visceral can take you down from a restricted shoulder due to an old stomach ulcer; to preventing hysterectomies and altering hormone levels.  But one of the main things it does is bring the client back in tune with their body and harmonise all their organs, including their brain, to work together optimally again.*

What to expect in a therapy session…

*When you come for a treatment for any of the above, we would have a chat with you first about the issues you’re presenting with and aim to build a picture or pattern of what could be the driving factors for these to have occurred. That could be mechanical trauma, emotional, physical, supplementary deficiencies, or a mixture of these.*

*We would then move onto the physical assessment where we would do a few tests and palpation (feeling) of the certain areas which fit our hypothesis from the subjective chat previously. Our job is to prove or disprove our own hypothesis and from there formulate a treatment plan alongside what works best for you and your goals from treatment.*

*Any Internal work or abdominal visceral work we perform will always be very gentle and at a pace and pressure which is comfortable for yourself. With Visceral therapy it’s important to work slowly and gradually since the organs will hit back if you work on them too quickly. Instead, you must gently encourage their natural movement and sink into the tissues like you’re trying to melt chocolate with your fingers.*

*After the treatment we would work through any home exercise programmes we feel you’d benefit from, to maintain and progress what we’ve worked on within our session. We also allow and invite you at any time throughout the session to ask questions so we can explain exactly what we are doing and why.*

*Hopefully this gives you a little overview of the type of treatment we specialise in and the areas we tend to treat as a team.*

Below are some Top tips and exercises for the 3 most common conditions we treat. We hope you find them helpful ☺

Vulvodynia

* Visceral tummy massage to the Pelvic bowl – *‘Pulling up the Boots’ - this is a scooping action in 3 places at the lower abdomen and around the pelvic bones. Scoop deep with your fingers/palm of the hand and pull towards the navel. Left, middle and right.*

*This releases the connective tissue* *that integrates with the vaginal tissues and reduces hypersensitivity.* ***(Appendix 12)***

* Belly breathing exercise – *lengthens the diaphragm which works in Tandem with the Pelvic floor muscles – loosen the diaphragm, you loosen the pelvic floor muscles indirectly – this will then stimulate our ‘Rest and Digest’ system and enable the hypersensitivity to reduce again.*

*Place a slightly heavy object on your tummy – like a bag of sugar – and as you breathe in you aim to lift the bag of sugar.*

*Breathe in for 2 secs and out for 4 secs.* ***(Appendix 11)***

* Self-massage to the adductors and adductor fascia- *merging into the vaginal tissues, bilaterally.* ***(Appendix 10,18, 4,5,6,9)***
* Frog/butterfly position *– 1 at a time – massage into the upper, inner thighs.* ***(Appendix 4)***
* Stretching out the buttock muscles *– since these house the sciatic and pudendal nerves which innervate the vaginal nerves. If your muscles get tight – they can slowly and gradually squeeze around the nerves reducing their blood flow and causing some sensitivity issues to the vaginal tissues.* ***(Appendix 1,2,3,7)***
* Aloe Vera Gelly *– ‘Forever’ Brand – it’s soothing, cool, and has anti-inflammatory properties for the local tissues.* ***(Appendix 20)***
* Perineum Massage *- Gentle self-lengthening of the perineum body with your finger at the base of the entrance to the vagina (usually this is away from the most sensitive part) – Then with the opposite hand – push down on the mound of tissue just above the pubic bone towards your clitoris – this will slacken the tension of the muscles to the clitoris region and therefore give you the ability to lengthen the muscles with the perineum stretch.* ***(Appendix 19)***

Endometriosis

* ‘Love your colon’ massage *– starting from the caecum (bottom right hand side of tummy) and working your way up along the torso, across under the ribcage, back down the left hand side and left lower pelvic region to finish. Lift off and then start again x 5 reps.*

***(Appendix 15)***

* ‘Pulling up the boots’ *– fascial lifting of the lower abdomen – scoop the tissues towards the navel from 3 points of the pelvis – Left/middle/right.* ***(Appendix 12)***
* V- Shape Massage *– Separate the pelvis into a V Shape and with a massage lotion/oil, scoop across diagonally from right lower abdomen to left lower ribcage – 1 above the navel, 1 across the navel and 1 below. Repeat on the opposite side.* ***(Appendix 13)***
* Belly Breathing *– Breath in for 2 secs and breath out for 4 secs.* ***(Appendix 11)***
* Peritoneum Lifting *– using the long edge of the thumb and fingers to grab and lift the superficial layers of the abdomen – lift and hold allowing the tissues to melt and drop from within. This separates the sticky layers of the organs and tissues to allow more freedom of movement within the tissues.* ***(Appendix 14)***
* Diet *- Aiming to cut out Xenoestrogens which can be found in foods like Bread and pasta. And can also be found in general products too like Make up.*
* Supplements-*Taking a good quality high strength Omega 3 like the ‘Natural Health Practice’ by Marilyn Glenville. The EPA is the key ingredient to get high levels in – approx. 770mg and the DHA in levels of 550mg.*

Lichens Sclerosus

* Massage release and stretches to the adductors *and adductor insertions just outside of labia bilaterally.* ***(Appendix 4,5,6,9,10,18)***
* Obturator self-release with a tennis ball/golf ball - *place in-between ischial (sitting bone) and labia (in sitting position) Gentle progressive release as able.* ***(Appendix 8)***
* Self Bulbo muscle release *- strumming a guitar string action at 5 and 7 O’clock.  Keep close to the entrance.  Can also do a crimping style action with pincer grip along both sides. 1min each side.* ***(Appendix 16,17)***
* Aloe Gelly *- can apply daily and only a pea size needed as goes very far.  Penetrates all layers of the skin, only thing in science to do so which is why it’s used for Burns.  Also, a natural anti-inflammatory. (Forever Brand approx £12)* ***(Appendix 20)***
* Biocare - Intrafresh Pessarys - *Consisting of Probiotics plus Garlic and Rose Oil to put the good bacteria back into the vagina and therefore changing the pH.  Reducing chances of thrush and also a treatment for it.*
* Ultrasound 3mHz device - *3-5mins over labia/vulva.  Can be purchased from Med-Fit - Tensmachineuk.com* ***(Appendix 21)***
* Probiotics and Prebiotics - *A good probiotic like Prescript Biotics, or another more specific for fighting candida - Saccharomyces Boulardii.*
* Omega 3 *- Oestrogen acts as a natural anti-inflammatory, and in Endo and lichens the oestrogen levels can often be low.  So, the best substitute is Omega 3, since it is completely anti-inflammatory unlike some of the other Omegas which can be Pro inflammatory at times.*
* Magnesium Citrate - *to support the muscles, assist them to slide and glide better and provide better bowel movements which in turn reduces pressure on the pelvic floor.*
* Breathing exercises - *the diaphragm works in tandem with the pelvic floor.  If your breathing becomes shallow and fast for any reason over a length of time (like stress and anxiety), your diaphragm as a muscle tightens, and this will cause the pelvic floor to tighten, especially the first layer at the entrance of the vagina.  So, breathing in for 2 secs and out for 4 secs is very beneficial as an exercise throughout the day.*