

SNS COLLEGE OF PHYSIOTHERAPY COIMBATORE-35

COURSE NAME : BPT., Physiotherapy II Year
SUBJECT : Exercise Therapy II
UNIT : I
TOPIC : Massage Techniques
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Massage techniques are **scientific, systematic manipulations** of soft tissues performed using the therapist's hands or mechanical devices. Each technique has a **specific purpose, direction, depth, rhythm, and physiological effect.**

Major massage techniques:

- Stroking Manipulations
- Pressure Manipulations (Kneading, Petrissage, Friction, Ironing)
- Tapotement / Percussion
- Vibration & Shaking.

Definition: Light, rhythmic movement using palms/fingers along the length of the body segment.

Purpose:

- Relaxation
- Pain relief via gate control
- Initiates or ends treatment

Technique:

- Hands relaxed
- Long, gliding strokes
- Direction: generally distal → proximal (towards heart)

Effects:

- Sedative effect
- Enhanced lymph drainage
- Improves patient–therapist rapport



Definition: Firm, gliding strokes along muscle length using full palmar surface.

Purpose:

- Warm-up tissues
- Prepare for deeper techniques
- Increase venous return

Technique:

- Slow, continuous movement
- Pressure applied from therapist's body weight

Effects:

- ↑ Blood circulation
- ↓ Edema
- Relief from muscle fatigue



Includes kneading, petrissage, picking up, wringing, skin rolling, and friction.

A. Kneading

Definition: Rhythmic pressing, lifting, squeezing, and releasing of tissues.

Types:

1. Palmar Kneading – using the heel of the hand

2. Digital Kneading – using fingertips

3. Thumb Kneading – for small areas

Purpose:

- Mobilize deep muscles
- Reduce adhesions
- Improve tissue elasticity

Technique:

- Circular, rhythmic movement
- Performed on large muscle groups (quadriceps, back)

Effects:

- Enhanced muscle nutrition
- ↓ Stiffness and spasm
- ↑ Range of motion



B. Petrissage

Includes:

- **Picking up** – lifting muscle between finger and thumb
- **Wringing** – twisting motion
- **Skin Rolling** – lifting & rolling skin to reduce adhesions

Purpose:

- Deeper mobilization
- Loosens tight fascia
- Breaks adhesions

Effects:

- Improves local circulation
- Removes metabolic waste
- Reduces myofascial tension



C. Friction

Definition: Small, deep circular or transverse movements over a specific site.

Types:

- **Circular Friction**
- **Transverse Friction (Cyriax)**

Purpose:

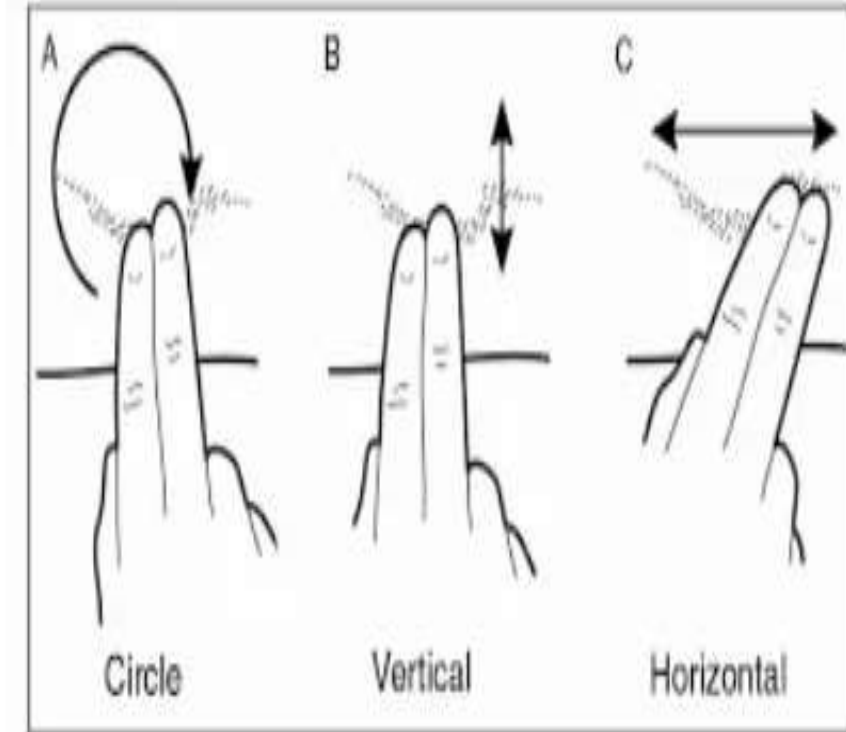
- Treat localized lesions (tendinitis, ligament injuries)
- Break scar tissue
- Align collagen fibers

Technique:

- Pressure applied with fingers/thumbs
- No lubrication

Effects:

- Stimulates healing
- Reduces chronic inflammation
- Increases local blood flow



TAPOTEMENT (PERCUSSION TECHNIQUES)

Tapotement techniques are **rapid, rhythmic striking movements**.

Types of Tapotement

A. Clapping

- Hollow palm striking
- Common in chest physiotherapy

B. Hacking

- Ulnar border of hands
- Rapid alternate movements
- Stimulates muscles

C. Beating

- Loose fists striking the surface
- Used for large muscle groups

D. Pounding

- Similar to beating but deeper pressure
- Suitable for athletes



A. Vibration

Definition: Fine, oscillatory movement transmitted through therapist's hands.

Purpose:

- Pain reduction
- Muscle relaxation
- Chest physiotherapy (loosens secretions)



B. Shaking

Definition: Larger oscillatory movements causing segmental body shaking.

Purpose:

- Relaxation of limb muscles
- Reduction of hypertonicity

Effects:

- ↓ Muscle tension
- Improves mobility



Physiological Effects

- Stimulates neuromuscular system
- Enhances muscle spindle activity
- Mobilizes respiratory secretions
- Increases blood circulation



Indications

- Chest physiotherapy
- Pre-event sports
massage
- Muscle activation
- Muscle tension &
spasms
- Chronic pain
- Edema (non-acute)
- Scar tissue & adhesions
- Reduced circulation
- Post-exercise fatigue

Contraindications

- Acute injury
- Open wounds
- High muscle tone/spasticity
- Acute inflammation
- Thrombosis
- Varicose veins
- Skin infections
- Open wounds
- Malignancy (local)
- Severe cardiac conditions

- Name:** Mr. Ramesh
- Age:** 38 years
- Occupation:** IT Professional (desk job)
- Diagnosis: Mechanical Low Back Pain** due to muscle tightness and poor posture

Management:

- A. Superficial Stroking
- B. Deep Effleurage
- C. Kneading of Paraspinals
- D. Petrissage

