

TRIED & TESTED

Knot a problem

This week KATHARINE CAPOCCI tries out a sports massage with Therapeutic Massage Clinic.

SPORTS massages aren't for the faint-hearted. Performed properly, the deep-tissue treatment really gets to work on muscles, and can be a touch on the ouchy side.

If you're into keep-fit, though, or perhaps in training for the Great North Run this year, a regular massage can be beneficial.

Helen Richardson of Therapeutic Massage Clinic explains they can help ease muscle fatigue and also minimise the risk of injury.

Helen runs a couple of clinics, her main base being at Darras Hall Surgery and another at Physiotherapy Matters in Gosforth.

She is an experienced pair of hands, trained to degree level in massage and, as well as remedial deep-tissue massage, also offers a range of therapies from relaxing massages, hot stone massage, Indian head massage and holistic facials to reflexology.

She is also off to the Paralympics at the end of August for a two-week stint as a sports massage therapist.

I can't claim to be any sort of athlete and neither am I in training for the Great North Run (once was quite enough!), but I have recently stepped up sessions at the gym, following surgery on a knee injury last year.

The great thing about Helen's massage treatments is they are very much bespoke to the client. Guided by me, she focuses on legs and back.

She tentatively works around my right knee area where I had surgery to reconstruct a ruptured cruciate ligament (picked up, I might add, whilst doing sport!).

Apart from working carefully around the still-tender surgery area, Helen does not hold back when it comes to really getting to grips with freeing up tight, knotted muscles.

She works with you, throughout the treatment, asking if the pressure applied is comfortable or if you could take a bit more!

I did wince a few times but legs immediately felt more supple and flexible.

The massage around the neck area, where I was holding a lot of tension, was a tad more relaxing than the legs workout. Tension disappeared into the ether.

It was, overall, an excellent massage and I felt like I was walking on air when I got to my feet.

My follow-up trip to the gym, hitting the running machine, was also a little easier. Job done!

. The one-hour sports massage costs £39. »
Therapeutic Massage Clinic at Darras Hall Surgery, Broadway, Ponteland, and Physiotherapy Matters, 8 Newlands Ave, Melton Park, Gosforth. Tel: 01661 871748.

