

What Is Visceral Organ Massage & Is It As Weird As It Sounds?



by Lindsay Kellner, mbg Sr. Wellness Editor

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Photo: Roberto David

Not long ago, I went to a craniosacral therapist [to try to cure my scalp](#). What I didn't realize was that my healer, [Ramesh Narine](#), is also well-studied in the art of visceral organ massage. In addition to tapping into the nervous system and spinal processes, he worked on my midsection. Front to back, along the diagonal, and side to side—I left feeling mildly stretched but majorly stimulated. It was intimate, and at times uncomfortable, but not

because he made it so. In full disclosure, I was worried about the sounds that would come out of my body with the gentle pressure from his hands! They moved...old, undigested food? stagnant energy? muscular adhesions? stuck emotions?...and what followed was a week of deep, deep rest.

Curious and slightly skeptical, I grilled Narine after our session. What can I expect to happen now? I wasn't feeling any immediate reactions directly afterward. What was my body telling you? How do you know when you need visceral organ manipulation? I had more questions than answers after this experience.

When I asked what organ typically demands his attention, he shared that many clients come in for what they think is a highly specialized reason. "Everyone has their something," he aptly pointed out, but a visceral massage therapist could easily make a living doing liver mobilizations alone. It makes sense—when the liver isn't **functioning optimally**, it can lead to fatigue, headaches, skin issues, and more. These symptoms would be enough to drive anyone to a more holistic solution, like organ massage.

One wide misconception is what the technique itself actually feels like. The word "visceral" connotes toughness, but it's actually pretty gentle and slow. It's like Reiki but firmer and with more intentional, palpable motion. He mentioned that prospective clients tend to believe that they need deep tissue stimulation for bodywork to be effective. "That's simply not true," according to Narine. That said, the most common feedback he gets after a session is "you didn't really do anything." Sometimes clients experience an immediate release, but more often than not it comes out gradually during the time after a session. This is in contrast to conventional massage, which can leave you feeling like a relaxed, limber, nourished version of yourself. I wasn't particularly relaxed during our session—it's hard to let go when someone is palpating your belly—but I did feel a shift the following week. I recovered

from a lingering cold, slept better than I had in ages, and felt just a little lighter.

Narine trained under [Jean Pierre Barral](#), the creator of visceral organ manipulation, who recommends that patients wait at least three weeks in between appointments for the effects of massage to settle in. "Because of the depth of tissue and its profound influence, manual interventions benefit from time off between sessions, for the work to settle and integrate," Narine said. Other releases his clients have experienced include relaxation in the jaw, change in headache, stomach sounds, loss of pain, ease of digestion.

I've tried a lot of [interesting things](#) in the name of wellness, and from where I stand, it's safe to say that the benefits of visceral organ massage outweigh any temporary weirdness—livers everywhere, rejoice! As always, check with your doctor before getting treated.

Lindsay Kellner

Lindsay is the senior wellness and beauty editor at mindbodygreen. She's a yoga teacher, podcast host, and enjoys almond milk lattes, breaking a sweat, abstract art, and writing about the latest esoteric wellness trends. She lives in Brooklyn with her husband and cat.

<https://www.mindbodygreen.com/articles/visceral-organ-massage-benefits>