

Tennis/Massage Ball Information Sheet

The use of a tennis/massage ball can be very helpful in relieving tension and knots throughout the body. There are a variety of massage tools available in various shapes; round, rectangular, softer, harder, textured, and non-textured. A regular tennis ball can also be used. An even better option are dog's chew toys. These are smaller than an average tennis ball, making them easier to manage and target specific muscles. They are also slightly harder than an average tennis ball, giving a more firm pressure. To most effectively use a ball or massage tool, place it between the targeted muscle and a hard surface, i.e. lean against a wall or lie on the floor, and relax the body's weight onto the tool. If targeting a knot, it is best to relax the body weight onto the ball and stay stationary for a period of time. The knot should begin to release during that initial static period and it will be apparent. At that point, move the body over the tool to further break up the adhesion/knot. To help manage the ball, put it in a tube sock to prevent it from rolling away and to assist in positioning it.

To treat a sore neck, a still point, can be used. A still point is a temporary stop in circulation to the brain and spinal cord that, when removed, flushes fresh blood flow through the area. This is particularly helpful to relieve tight neck muscles that can lead to headaches and migraines. A still point can be induced by putting two balls in a sock and tie it off close to the balls to keep them together at the bottom of the sock. Lie on the two balls, with them just below the ridge at the back of the skull and one on either side of the spine. Lie on them for 10-15 minutes and the tension should ease. A slight headache may be apparent during this treatment or right after, but once complete, the headache should dissipate.