

ABDOMINAL THERAPY COLLECTIVE

Your Abdominal Massage

A simple home care guide

Your Abdominal Massage (YAM) supports your body towards optimal health. It's simple to do, profoundly effective, and improves your body's flow of blood, lymph, nerve and energy.

In the 1980's Dr Arvigo was in Belize, Central America, serving as apprentice to the renowned Maya Healer Don Elijo Panti. Inspired and encouraged by this 90-year-old healer, she developed a self-care massage for people to continue their healing in their own homes.

This guide has been created to support you as you perform YAM, enhancing the treatments from your Abdominal Therapy Practitioner. Massage helps to relax your diaphragm, encourages optimal circulation, softens organs and connective tissue.

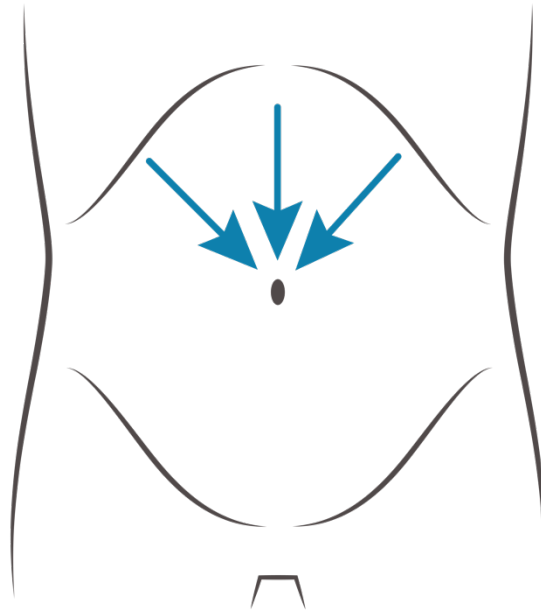
Are you ready to YAM?

- Empty your bladder and find a quiet moment in a comfortable setting.
- Take this time to connect with your belly and your breath.
- Ask yourself to relax your jaw, your shoulders and wherever you feel tension.
- To help soften your abdomen, you may like to place a pillow under your head and under your knees.
- If you have a prolapse or significant lower abdominal congestion, you may add another pillow below your hips and a second pillow under your knees.
- You can choose how to perform YAM:
 - Through loose clothing.
 - Over a sheet.
 - Directly on your skin, with or without oil/lotion.
- You may find it helpful initially, to have these instructions read out a loud while you do YAM.

Let's start with your upper abdomen

Downward strokes from ribcage to navel

There are 3 strokes, each stroke starts at the edge of your ribcage and moves downwards to your navel.



Central starting position

Place relaxed, hands flat on your body, fingertips facing and meeting together just beneath your sternum. Fingers remain relaxed during strokes.

- With comfortable pressure, gently sink your finger pads into your belly and stroke down to your navel.
- Repeat three times.

Side position

Place your hands on one side just below the rib cage.

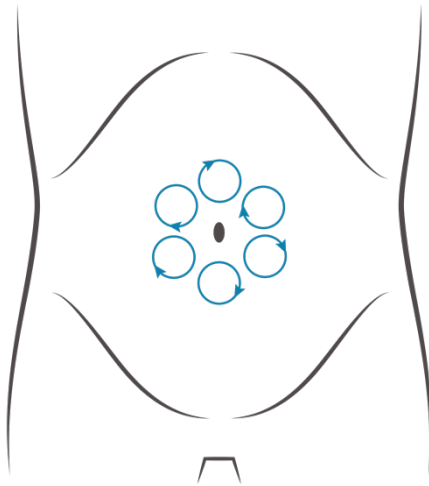
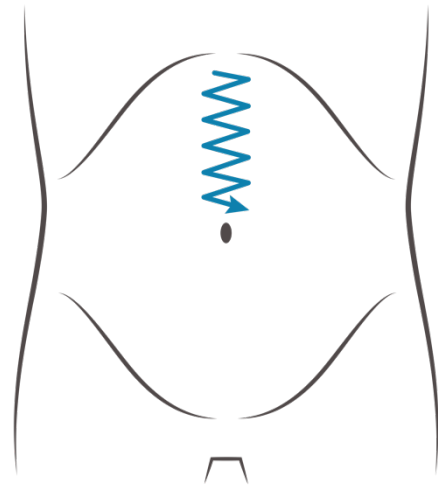
- Perform a similar stroke with your finger pads, moving your hands diagonally to your navel.
- Repeat three times.
- Repeat on the other side.

This entire sequence 3 central/3 side/3 side (which is 9) gets repeated 3 times, finishing with 3 final central strokes (30 strokes) or as much, or as little as feels right.

Zig Zag Strokes

Place your hands in the central starting position.

- With gentle pressure, zig zag your finger pads across midline towards your navel. The zig zag movement is no wider than 1in/2.5cm in width.
- When you reach your navel, gently lift your hands and return to start position.
- Repeat 3 times. With each stroke gradually increase pressure within your comfort level.

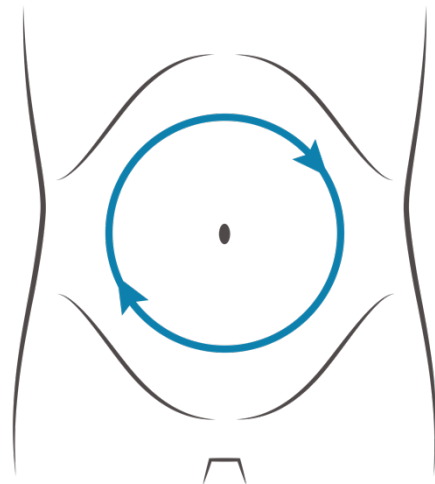


Circles

With the finger pads of your first 3 fingers, gently sink into the belly next to your navel.

- Make small clockwise, circular strokes at regular intervals around the navel.
- Work around the navel in this way 3 times in total.

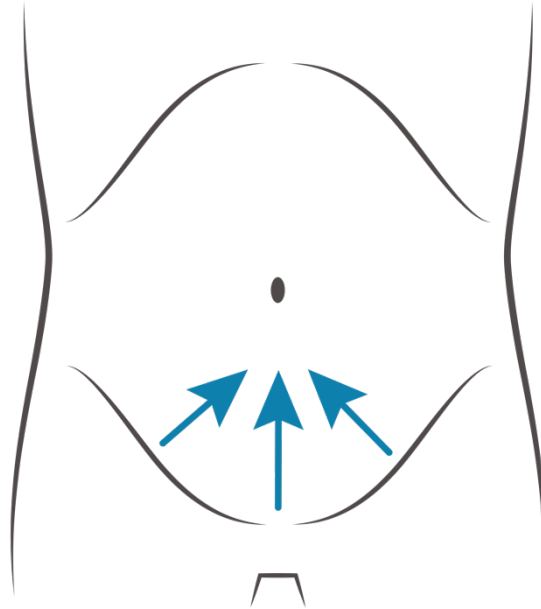
- Enlarge these circles to incorporate the whole abdomen, massaging over your large and small intestines.
- Work around the entire abdomen in this way 3 times in total.



Now let's move to your lower abdomen

Upward Strokes from Pubic Bone

Bring the sides of your index fingers together and cross your thumbs behind them, allow your fingers to gently curl.



Central starting position

Place your fingers on your pubic bone and allow them to sink into the soft tissue above.

- Maintaining pressure with your finger pads, slowly draw your hands towards your navel.
- Lift your hands, return to central start position.
- Repeat three times.

Side position

Place your finger pads diagonally in the soft space between pubis and hip. One pinkie remains on the pubic bone, keep all your fingers touching each other, allow your other pinkie to come close to your hip bone.

- Maintaining pressure, stroke diagonally towards the midline.
- Lift your finger pads and return to starting side position.
- Perform this stroke three times.
- Repeat on the other side.

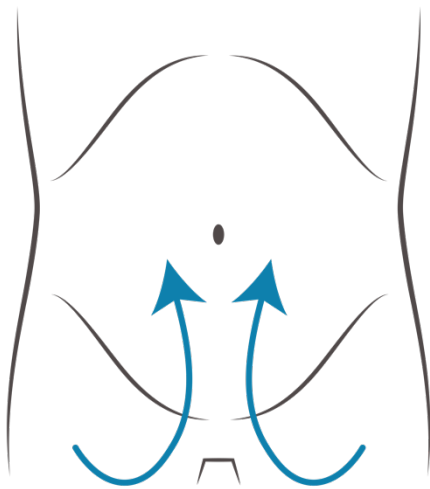
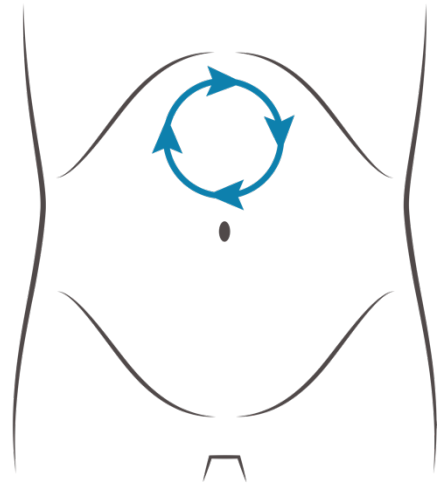
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It's time to stimulate your lymph flow

Upper Abdomen

Place hands and fingers flat on your skin just below your sternum.

- With a feather light touch, **very slowly**, make a small, sweeping, clockwise circle between your sternum and your navel.
- Repeat 3 times.



Lower Abdomen

Bend your knees and place the flat of each hand on top of each thigh in their natural resting position.

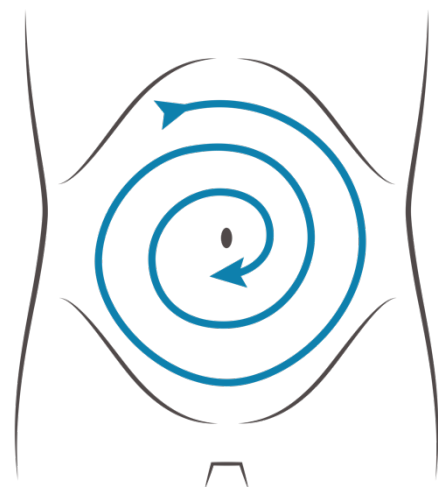
- With both hands working together, **make very light**, slow, continuous 'J' shaped strokes along the thighs and swoop up towards the navel.
- Repeat 3 times.

Bringing it all together

Final spiral

Relax both hands, flat on your belly. Use the pressure that feels best for you.

- Slowly spiral lightly around your navel clockwise. Gradually make your spiral bigger until you are including your whole belly.
- Maintaining your clockwise movement, gradually close your spiral, making your circles progressively smaller until your hands are resting on your navel.
- Repeat 3 times.
- When complete, rub your hands together for warmth, then lay them over your belly, breathe slowly, deeply and give thanks for all your body does to keep you alive and well.



Considerations & Cautions

If you have any questions or concerns, your Abdominal Therapy Practitioner is here to help. Below are a few points for you to consider:

- It's not unusual to experience a variety of emotions as you begin YAM'ing.
- It's not uncommon for signs/symptoms to temporarily worsen as your body works to improve any inflammation or indeed for things to improve quickly as you start YAM'ing.
- If you have reflux, hiatal hernia/repair, it's best to use light pressure.
- If you have prolapse issues, speak with your Abdominal Therapy Practitioner for further support.
- Discontinue YAM if it's uncomfortable or you have an infection.
- If you have undergone abdominal surgery, check in with your Abdominal Therapy Practitioner to confirm when you are ready to resume YAM.
- For prostate issues, you may observe cloudy urine as you begin YAM.
- Approaching and during menstruation it's advisable to work lightly within your comfort zone. You may experience changes in your menstrual flow.
- Avoid uterine massage during the first 20 weeks of pregnancy. Speak with your Abdominal Therapy Practitioner for specific pregnancy YAM.
- Avoid deep uterine massage if you have an IUD (intrauterine device) in place. Speak with your Abdominal Therapy Practitioner for specific advice.
- If you have a pessary in place, you might like to remove it prior to YAM if you are able.
- YAM is beneficial when undergoing assisted reproductive technology. Speak with your Abdominal Therapy Practitioner for further support.

Your observations

It'll be beneficial for both you and your practitioner if you note any changes you may experience as you do YAM. You can use your YAM Journal to help with this.

If you have any concerns get in contact with your practitioner.