**What is a body massage?**

**Massage is the organized form of touch performed by the hands to produce specific effects on the cardio, vascular and muscular systems of the body.**

**In about 1800 Swedish body massage emerged from Europe. Per Henrik Ling (1786-1839) a Swedish physiologist and gymnastics instructor, travelled to China and gathered a detailed insight into their Q:\140066.enu\MEDIA\CAGCAT10\j0300912.wmfmassage techniques, With the information He learnt along with His understanding of physiology, He developed the Swedish body massage, which is the most popular form of massage used today. The Swedish government was so impressed by His system, that in 1813 they give Him funds to build The Royal Institute of Gymnastics in Stockholm where He taught it to others. His treatment became popular in Britain and Europe and in 1860 it was being used in America.**

**In 1894 the society of trained masseuses was formed which worked hard to raise the standards and to promote massage therapy as a professional occupation. In 1894 Sir William Bennett opened a massage department at St Georges Hospital London which established massage as an accepted form of treatment within the medical profession. Massage was used to treat people during both world wars and since 1960 and the rise of the human growth movement, which believed that people didn't have to be sick to enjoy the benefits of massage, there has been a continuous demand.**

**Holistic Swedish massage is the classic western style of massage. It forms the basis for many other types of massage including sports massage and deep tissue massage.**

**Benefits of Swedish Body Massage**

**\* Relieves muscular tension & pain caused by muscular disorders**

**\* Relieves tension in the muscle fibres**

**\* Removes the build-up of lactic acid due to over exercise**

**\* Increases blood & lymph flow which speeds up the removal of toxins**

**\* Induces relaxation, slowing down the heart rate & thus lowering blood pressure**

**\* Can help alleviate stress-related conditions such as insomnia, headaches, joint & muscular disorders such as arthritis & back pain, digestive complaints, such as constipation.**

**\* Promotes a sense of wellbeing**

**\* Aches & pains due to nervous tension can be soothed**

**\* Decreases stress levels**

**\* It's rejuvenating & up-lifting**

**\* You feel stimulated & alert; you feel healthier & therefore look healthier\* It can encourage you to maintain your weight loss regime**