Seeking massage therapist

Dear Alice,

I know you probably can't recommend practitioners on the website, but I was wondering if you know of any good masseuses in the Columbia University area. The only places my friends have recommended are way downtown, and I really don't have a lot of time to get down there (but my shoulders and neck could really use some work).

I'll understand if you aren't allowed to give me such recommendations. I just thought you guys might have a good idea.

Answer

Dear Reader,

You're right, suggesting specific massage therapists can pose some problems, but there are a number of resources that can help you find someone on your own. A good place to start is the American Massage Therapy Association (AMTA) web site, where you can:

- Learn what to look for in a qualified massage therapist.
- Learn what to expect at a massage therapy session.
- Find out what the credentials of massage therapy professionals are.
- Learn the differences between certification, licensing, and accreditation.

The AMTA web site also allows you to search through the AMTA membership to find a qualified massage therapist in specific areas across the United States. Each listing has contact info, schedules, education level and credentials attained, experience in the field, and the types of massage offered, such as Swedish, Shiatsu, acupressure, deep tissue, sports, and cranio-sacral. Call a particular massage therapist for more details or if you have any questions.

Since you're looking in the Columbia area, it would also be a good idea for you to check out the New York State Education Department’s Office of the Professions web site for:

- Online License Verification, where you can search by the massage therapist's name to see if s/he is licensed or certified, or had any recent disciplinary action
- Definition of the practice of massage therapy and its license requirements

Alice!
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