

Osteopathic Manipulation Therapy: Information and Instructions

What is osteopathic manipulation therapy (OMT)?

Osteopathic Manipulative Treatment, or OMT, is a non-invasive set of hands-on techniques used by osteopathic physicians (DOs) to diagnose, treat, and prevent illness or injury. Using OMT, a DO manually moves a patient's muscles and joints using techniques that include:

- stretching
- gentle pressure
- resistance

OMT can be used with other medical interventions to help you recover from illness and injury and reduce pain. Using OMT, your DO can effectively treat your muscles and joints to relieve pain, promote healing and increase overall mobility. Osteopathic medicine and chiropractic techniques overlap, but they are not identical. As a general rule, chiropractors focus most of their attention on the spine, while osteopathic physicians devote their efforts throughout the musculoskeletal system, including soft tissues and joints outside the spine.

Before having OMT

Please let your provider know if you:

- Have or had any recent illnesses or surgery
- Have fallen and not sought medical treatment
- Have or had a fracture, surgery, or cancer in your spine, ribs, or the bones in your arms or shoulders
- Have osteoporosis
- Think you may be pregnant

During OMT

You will remain fully clothed and be asked to lie face down on a padded exam table. You will likely have a heating pad applied to your back over a towel in order to relax your muscles. A staff chaperone will be present during the procedure. Dr. Carstens will ask you to roll on your side and back during certain points of the treatment, and will frequently seek your response and feedback to treatment.

After Care Instructions

How should I care for myself after osteopathic manipulation therapy?

1. Continue to take your medications as prescribed.
2. You may resume your regular daily activities. Avoid overdoing, or doing things you have not done for some time such as lifting or heavy housework.
3. Continue with any prescribed exercises, especially range of motion and stretching.
4. You may feel sore for a day or two. If necessary, apply hot/cold packs for 15 minutes each, 2 to 3 times per day for the next one to two days.