



RIEN NEWSLETTER

ACT TODAY!

Update your data

INVITATION

*First meeting with your
new board 4 nov 2024*

REFLEX STUDY

*Reflexology in Cancer
treatment*

ARTICLE WRF

*World Reflexology Foundation
Free Online Self-Help Reflexology
Workshop for
Legs, Knees, Ankles, and Feet*

EVENT 2025

*AGM and Conference
9 - 11 may 2025*



BOARD INTRO

Dear members

We introduce to you the new newsletter.

During the board meeting we discussed, among other things, drawing up a multi-year policy plan and we examined the definition of reflexology. We discussed whether the formulation today still fits the definition as we established it in Amsterdam 2017. We decided to refine the definition, but all for later newsletters and membership meetings.

Now we would like to take you through two articles: one done in the Netherlands about research in the context of supporting patients with cancer through Reflexology and the other from the WRF about an online Reflexology Self-Help Workshop to give you a preview of the next conference. You may be able to hear and see more of them in Eindhoven.

In this way we want to share more news from the field with you.

At the bottom of the letter you will find a question from our secretary, Tamara. We will discuss this question, the focus we formulated and many other things at the first online membersmeeting on November 4th.

We hope to see you then and receive your feedback on our work.

Enjoy reading



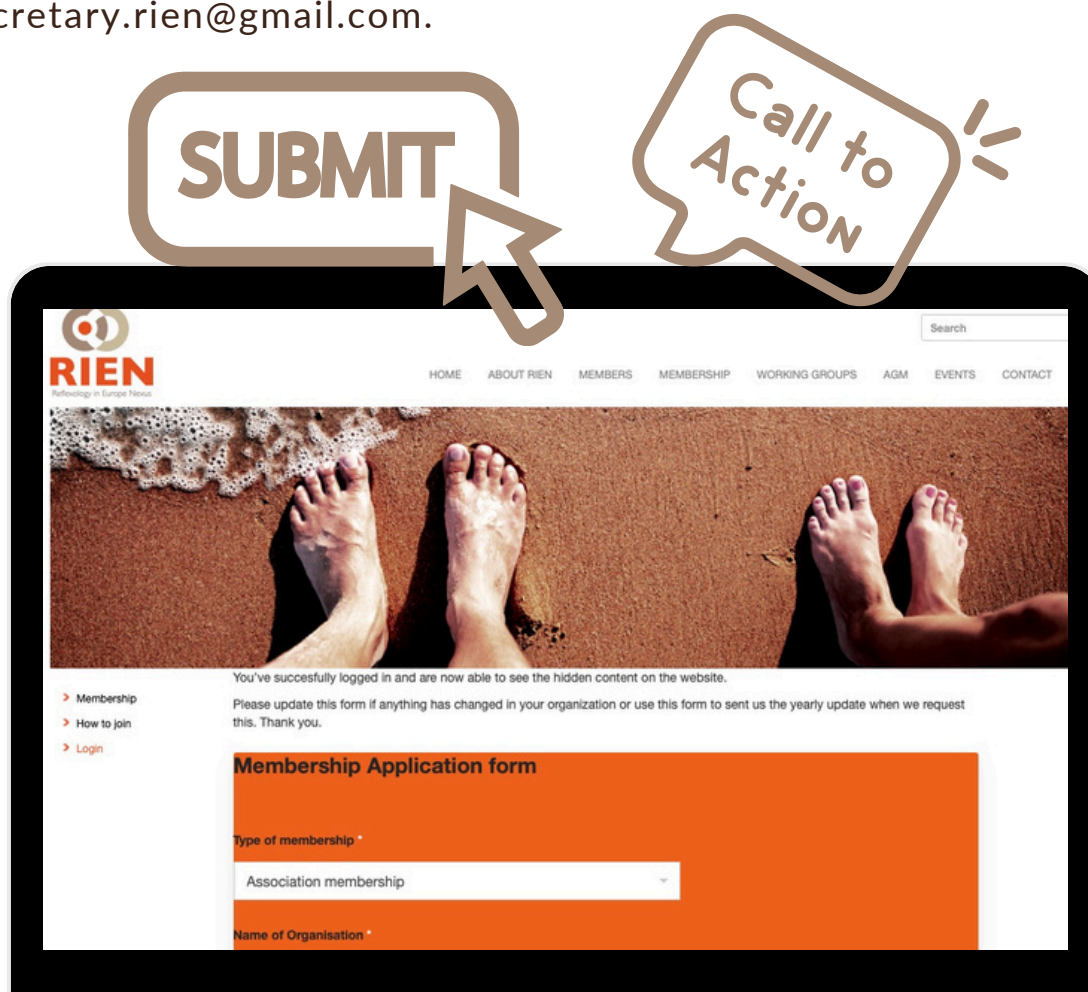
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ACT TODAY!

As we want our future communication to be to correct and to the correct stakeholder, your board requests that you update your data.

If you haven't done this after our first newsletter, please do so, because we have received only 3 updates. Thank you!

You can update your data by filling in the form [at this link](#). If you need the password, do not hesitate to contact me via secretary.rien@gmail.com.



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MEET-UP

You're

Invited!

MEMBERS MEETING

MONDAY

4TH NOVEMBER 2024

7:30PM TO 9:30PM (CET)

PLATFORM: MICROSOFT TEAMS

INVITE WAS SENT TO OUR
ASSOCIATIONS AND SCHOOLS
VIA SEPERATE MAIL.

DID YOU NOT RECEIVE IT?
PLEASE LET US KNOW!



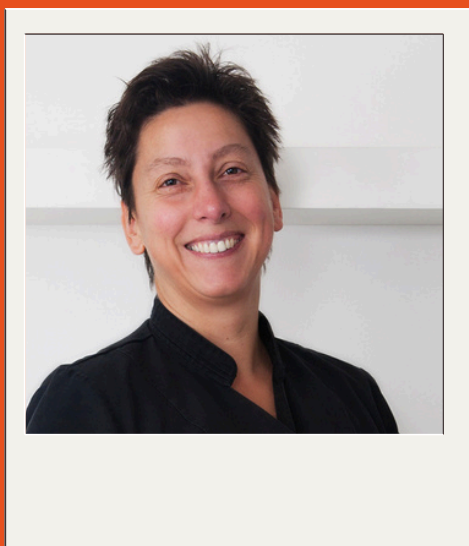
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REFLEX STUDY

Author Karine de Laat

Karine de Laat (1968) completed her masterstudy sociology at Wageningen University in the Netherlands. She worked as senior communications consultant for the Dutch government for several years, when she decided to switch careers and become a full-time reflexologist. Her mission is to access and share information from reflexology research to the public. She publishes for the Dutch Organisation of Reflexologists (VNRT) and Magazine for Naturopathic and Integrative Healthcare (VNIG).



www.therapie-renkum.nl

Reflexology in Cancer treatment

Every year, 100,000 people are told they have cancer. In the last twenty-five years, the number of diagnoses has doubled. In the Netherlands the most common cancers are skin cancer, breast cancer, colon cancer, lung cancer and prostate cancer. Fortunately, better diagnostics and treatment increase survival rates. Supportive therapies such as reflexology help people with cancer cope with their disease and the side effects of hospital treatments. In The Netherlands reflexology is recognized as a supportive therapy in cancer care by the Dutch Cancer Institute. Reflexologists specialized in oncology are registered and listed on the Institute's website. Studies from 2003 to 2020 show that reflexology therapy promotes mental, physical and emotional fitness in cancer and diminishes pain.

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REFLEX STUDY

1. Quality of Life

Quality of Life aims to capture the well-being of an individual on a physical, mental and social level and the degree to which a person is able to participate in or enjoy life events. The increasing attention to well-being fits into a social development in which the concept of health is subject to change. Dutch health researcher Machteld Huber introduced a new, dynamic understanding of the concept of health, Positive Health. Positive Health includes different perspectives of health such as which sense of purpose, resilience and self-regulation. Quality of Life research measures subjective experience through validated questionnaires, such as SF-36. Also, WHO emphasizes quality of life as an important aspect of health in the context of the individual's culture, value system, goals and expectations.

In six studies, reflexology has positive effects on Quality of Life [1] [2] [3] [6] [8] [11].

While these effects are statistically significant, the older studies are less reliable due to their design. Özdelikara's [8] 2017 study is the most comprehensive. She surveyed 60 participants in treatment for breast cancer about how they perceived their overall health, how they perceived their functioning and what side effects they suffered from. This included fatigue, nausea, breathing, sleep, appetite loss, constipation, diarrhea.

Participants were divided into two groups. One group received reflexology during chemotherapy; the control group received only chemotherapy. Participants in the reflexology group scored significantly better on all side effects during the treatment period and shortly thereafter. The control group showed a worsening of side effects, but this recovered after chemotherapy ended. Not only physically, but also emotionally and cognitively, the reflexology group experienced less symptoms.

REFLEX STUDY

The researcher concludes that reflexology has a positive effect on the overall health status of breast cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy.

Tarrasch [11] found a similar effect. In this study, patients from the control group experienced way more decline in Quality of Life, than the reflexology group.

Wyatt [6] examined the Quality of Life of 286 patients with advanced and metastatic breast cancer. Patients received chemotherapy or hormone therapy. Participants were assigned to a group via a computer program. The reflexology group received a 30-minutes of reflexology by a professional, the control group received a mock treatment by a layperson, the third group received standard care. For four weeks, the first two groups were treated weekly. Reflexology consisted of the walking thumb technique on nine reflex zones, in the fake treatment the walking thumb technique was applied but the nine reflex zones in question were avoided.

The protocol is described in Flynn's study [11]. During the treatments, dialogue was kept to a minimum. The reflexology group showed significant reduction in dyspnea (shortness of breath) compared to sham treatment and control group. Dyspnea was the largest disabling factor in quality of life for women with advanced breast cancer in this study. This study showed an improvement of physical function (medium effect) in the reflexology group compared to the control group, a small effect on fatigue of the sham treatment compared to the control group.

2. Cancer-related pain

Pain is an important factor in Quality of Life and daily functioning. Pain is common in patients with cancer. More than a third of patients experience pain during diagnosis. During treatment, this increases to 70% and even 90% in the final stage. Decreases in pain due to reflexology were found in six studies ([1][3][5][7][8][11]).

REFLEX STUDY

Lee [5] conducted a meta-analysis on 12 studies on the effect of various forms of massage therapy on pain in cancer. Four of these studies with a total of 152 participants involved reflexology. Lee concluded that reflexology therapy is effective for all types of cancer and even more effective than body massage. Older studies have also found significant effects of reflexology therapy on cancer pain. Stephenson [1] found a direct positive effect on pain in patients with metastatic cancer. This effect did not last longer than 3 hours, but also showed a decline in the use of opiate painkillers [8]. Turkish research [7] with 60 patients on the effect of reflexology in colorectal cancer also shows a significant effect of pain reduction.

3. Fatigue

Fatigue in cancer is often described as a persistent feeling of exhaustion, more severe than normal fatigue with exertion.

It is a fatigue that does not improve after rest and sleep. Cancer-related fatigue can manifest as a feeling of weakness and inability to engage in physical exertion, mental fatigue with difficulty concentrating and remembering, difficulty in thinking and decreased interest and motivation. Some people experience emotional fatigue that leads to irritability or emotional instability. As a PhD of the Free University in The Netherlands, Sanne Menning investigated the relationship between cancer treatment and impaired cognition. She found a relationship with fatigue and white matter in the brain. People with cancer-related fatigue had a lower concentration of white matter. White matter contains the neurons that are responsible for information transmission. Increased concentrations of inflammatory factors could affect the brain causing the decline of white matter. However, this process is reversible, recovery is possible [15].

REFLEX STUDY

Exercise programs and cognitive therapy are often used to combat fatigue in cancer. Reflexology can be added to this list of possible treatments. Five studies have examined the effect of reflexology on fatigue in cancer. A 2011 Korean study reported reduced vomiting, nausea, and fatigue by reflexology [8]. Previous research from 2010 supports these outcomes [3]. The most recent studies from 2017 also show significant changes in favor of reflexology.

4. Anxiety and depression

Anxiety and depression are a natural reaction to a cancer diagnosis and are responsible for a negative impact on the quality of life of cancer patients. Anxiety and depression make returning to the office more difficult. A Dutch professor of psychosocial oncology, Irma Verdonck, estimated that 25% of the patients with cancer suffer from depression. According to her, it is proven that there is a correlation between survival, disease progression, depression

and quality of life. Mindfulness is widely used in The Netherlands because it gives good results in cancer. Patients with cancer who participate in mindfulness groups experience less symptoms of depression and anxiety and more emotional control and meaningful existence.

Just like mindfulness, reflexology therapy gives reduced anxiety and mood improvement. This was found in five studies. [1][2][4][12] In the reflexology group of Stephenson's study, participants reported less feelings of anxiety after reflexology [1]. Quattrin also found a significant decrease in anxiety in 30 cancer patients by reflexology [12].

There seems to be a direct relationship between physiological relaxation and decrease in anxiety. Pain and tension affect each other negatively. Welch-McCaffrey described the relationship between anxiety and depression on the one hand and cancer-related pain on the other [1].

Of interest is the study by Osaka [4].

REFLEX STUDY

In this study, hand reflexology was applied to 34 patients in the final stage of life. Applying reflexology for only five minutes had a significant effect on anxiety reduction.

Though these results are promising, a systematic review showed mixed and conflicting findings [13]. So, we need more well-designed, high-quality clinical research and well-established reporting guidelines. The effectiveness of reflexology in cancer pain however is confirmed by a systematic review with 948 participants [14].

This article was written for the Dutch Association of Reflexology Therapists (VNRT) in 2018 and updated for RiEN in 2024. RiEN strives for recognition of reflexology as a complementary, patient-centered and cost-reducing therapy by European national healthcare systems.

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ARTICLE WRF



World Reflexology Foundation Free Online Self-Help Reflexology Workshop for Legs, Knees, Ankles, and Feet

WRF Vice President and Volunteer Trainer Stefanie Sabouchian led the newest workshop from the World Reflexology Foundation which focused on Legs, Knees, Ankles and Feet. The workshop welcomed people from all over the United States (CA, DE, FL, GA, MA, ME, TX), Canada (AB, BC), Europe (Belgium, Spain) and New Zealand. This was a free online workshop that showcased non-vocational Self-Help Reflexology and Self-Care. It is the WRF's vision and mission to bring Reflexology to everyone around the globe and better health to everyone through Reflexology.



Stefanie leading the workshop and explaining the World Reflexology Foundation



Participants from New Zealand, Europe, Canada, and from all over the United States



Paul explaining what Reflexology is and how it works.

WRF board member and Volunteer Trainer Paul Harvey gave a brief summarization of Reflexology. He explained that Reflexology uses maps that resemble the human body that can be found on the feet, hands and outer ears. Working with these maps, which correspond to body parts through reflex points, may have a positive effect on the nervous system.

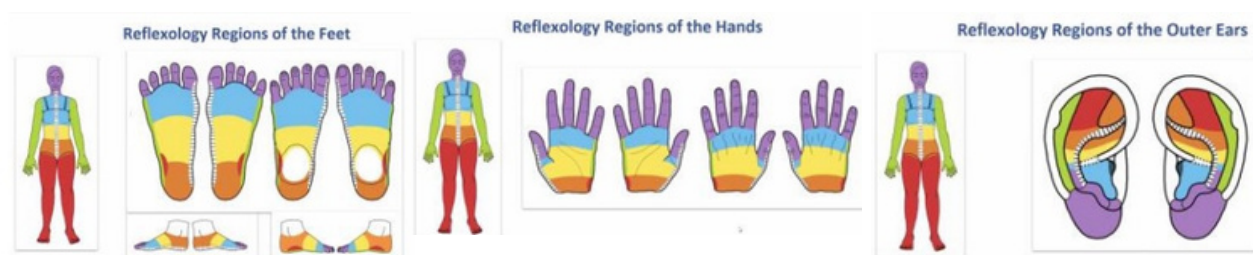
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ARTICLE WRF

Using a gentle touch over the reflex points may help to remove blockages on and around the nerve endings. This can help to oxygenate the blood and organs, bringing about profound relaxation.

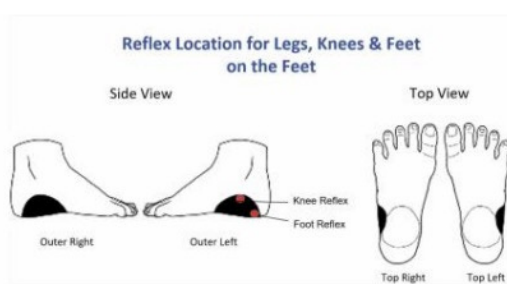


WRF Color Charts help understanding the body regions and their corresponding reflex locations on the Feet, Hands, and Ears.

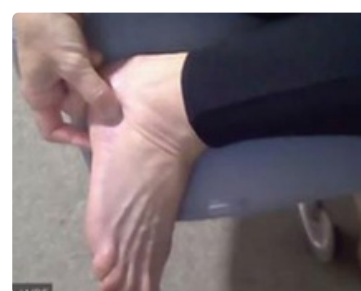
The World Reflexology Foundation showcased their original color charts. This visual aid helped to give the audience an understanding of the body regions and their corresponding locations on the feet, hands, and outer ears by using matching colors. In addition to the color charts, more detailed maps were presented. On these maps were specific areas of focus detailed on diagrams of the feet, hands and outer ears showing where to work for the subject of this workshop – the Legs, Knees, Ankles and Feet.



Liz showing where to find the Leg Reflex



**For Leg Issues:
Feet 1st**



Liz demonstrating how to work Leg Reflex on her Foot

Liz van Beek, a WRF Volunteer Trainer, began the instructional portion of the workshop. Liz began with the feet and, using a plastic three-dimensional foot, she proceeded to show where on the outer foot to work. Below the ankle bone on the outer side of the foot, and about halfway between the heel and the base of the small toe, there is a soft “triangle”.

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This is the reflex area for the Leg, Knee, Ankle, Foot regions of the body. Liz explained that in this triangular area, closer to the heel, we find the Foot and Ankle reflexes. From there she moved up over the lower Leg reflex to the apex of the triangle where we find the Knee reflex. Working back down toward the sole of the foot and forward toward the small toe we are working the upper Leg reflex.

Next was the demonstration of different techniques, and how to use one's thumb or fingers to gently "walk" or "glide" over the reflex points to achieve Self-Help Reflexology. It was then encouraged to work on one's own foot while Liz crossed her ankle over her opposite knee and reached around to the outer portion of her foot. She talked the viewers through the different areas of the Leg reflexes as she demonstrated, pointing out that a tender area might require a gentle pressure and more focus.



**Paul showing Leg Reflex
Location on the Hand**



**For Leg Issues:
Hand 2nd**



**Paul demonstrating
how to work the Leg
Reflex on his own Hand**

Following Liz was the hand demonstration. **Paul Harvey** used his own hand to familiarize the attendees with the Leg reflex area. Similarly to the Foot, the Leg reflexes could be found on the outer edge (the small finger side) of the heel of the hand. On this soft area, it was shown that the Foot and Ankle reflexes are close to the wrist, working toward the Knee reflex, slightly toward the small finger, and the hip reflex, again slightly toward the small finger.

As Paul demonstrated the area on his hand, which was supported by his other hand, he encouraged everyone watching to try it on themselves. Working on the hand could be a more convenient alternative to the foot, while in a public setting.

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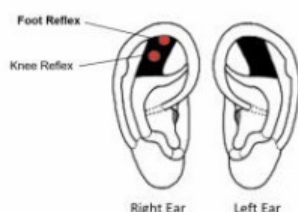
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**Kathy showing Leg Reflex
on Plastic Ear**

Reflex Location for Legs, Knees & Feet on the Ears



**For Leg Issues:
Ears 3rd**



**Kathy holding Leg Reflex
on her own Ear**

Kathy Reynolds, WRF board member and WRF Volunteer Trainer, showed where to hold on the outer ear. While the foot and the hand required a type of thumb roll or gliding action over the reflex locations, the ear reflex points use a hold method. Kathy described this as a tip-to-tip action: the tip of the thumb supporting the back of the ear while the tip of the index finger is on the front of the ear. On a large plastic ear, Kathy showed the location starting with the upper Leg reflex at the base of the wide ridge, the Knee, Ankle, Foot reflexes progressively to the top of the wide ridge near the top of the ear. Using the tip-to-tip hold, Kathy demonstrated on her own ears. She suggested holding both ears at the same time and relaxing the shoulders while taking nice deep breaths. These holds should be at least five minutes for the effects to take place but can be longer.



Tina reviewing Leg Reflex on the Feet, Hands, and Ears

During the demonstration portion of the workshop, attendees were encouraged to follow along with the presenters to feel where the reflex points can be found on their own feet, hands, and ears. It was shared that the more often one could work on themselves, the more profound the effects.

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If an area was tender, it was encouraged to hold or lightly work that area until the tenderness subsides. In addition, it was suggested to work the areas at least five minutes or longer, and more often, if time permits.

WRF board member and Volunteer Trainer **Tina Meyer** directed the audience to our website: www.worldreflexologyfoundation.org and to our email at: info@worldreflexologyfoundation.org for additional information and/or any questions. She also mentioned that we are a501(C)(3) and run completely on donations. All our workshops are offered to the public at no charge. Tina then demonstrated a quick review on the feet, the hands, and the ears, and showed, once again, where to find and work the reflex points for the Legs, Knees, Ankles, and Feet.

Before the conclusion of the workshop, questions were asked. One question asked was about which side should be focused on in regard to a specific side for an ailment. Stefanie answered that the same side was usually effective, however in her experience, working both sides usually produces the most positive results. Contraindications, such as an open sore or bruise located on or around a reflex point, were advised to be avoided. The importance of drinking water after performing Reflexology was highly recommended.

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EVENT 2025



RiEN Conference

Positive health
by reflexology

an empowering art

Save the date

9th of May AGM
10th of May Conference + Gala Diner
11th of May Workshops + Meet & Greet bootcamp

 9-11 MAY 2025

 EINDHOVEN @
THE NETHERLANDS

What falls under “Positive Health” you ask? Holistic wellness, preventative care, stress reduction, energy flow,... Reflexology is a proactive, comprehensive and balanced approach to health that goes beyond the treatment of illnesses, aiming instead for overall physical, mental, and emotional harmony and that is what we will be talking about.

More info follows soon!

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