

MEDIA RELEASE

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FREE massage for breast cancer survivors

Women from the Huon Valley who have had breast cancer surgery can book in for a FREE massage at the Geeveston Medical Centre on Thursday October 29.

Margaret Horn is a qualified Oncology massage therapist and will offer a free gentle neck, shoulder and scar massage as part of Breast Cancer Awareness month.

Nearly every woman who has had breast surgery, whether it was a lumpectomy, mastectomy – sometimes even a biopsy – finds herself dealing with scar tissue or keloids after her wounds have healed.

On a very basic level, scars are caused when the dermis, the layer of skin underneath the surface, is damaged. The body produces a fibrous tissue called collagen to close the wound and assist in healing. When collagen is left behind once the damage to the dermis has been repaired, a scar is the result.

“For years oncologists told their patients to steer clear of massage, fearing that the manipulation of skin and muscle might cause cancer to spread. That’s been proven not to be true. We also know now that it can help with the scarring process and we actually encourage massage when women start to get adhesions,” said Dr Benjamin Anderson, chair of the Breast Health Global Initiative at the Fred Hutchison Cancer Research Centre in Washington, USA.

Adhesions, Anderson explains, can form as the body tries to heal after a surgery.

“When skin touches down to muscle, it can stick like superglue instead of being able to be mobile,” he said. “Massage can break up those adhesions and help maintain, and in some situations, regain, mobility.”

The extent of an individual’s surgical scars has much to do with genetics, age, the type of surgery, and whether or not the skin has been previously radiated. Just as no two surgeries are identical – neither are the outcomes. And since we heal from the inside out, although a woman may feel that she is finished with the process several months after surgery, her skin may still be a work in progress.

You’ll want to get your doctor’s approval, but generally once the wound has healed, massage therapy can be performed. To book your place, phone the Geeveston Medical Centre on 6297 1903.



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