Ayurveda, the over 5000 year old science of longevity, comes from the Vedic civilization of India and is considered the oldest and most comprehensive health care system in the world. In Ayurveda, a wealth of applications are described, which are not only extremely pleasant, but at the same time also promote health by restoring our inner balance.

A full body oil massage before the morning shower or bath has a special significance. It is easy to perform and easy to integrate into the morning routine. In just about quarter of an hour in the morning you can easily enjoy the holistic effects on mind and body.

The Ayurvedic textbook, Charaka Samhita, states: “Oil massage (Abhyanga) produces a soft, flexible, strong and attractive body. It is extremely beneficial for the skin and therefore should be carried out regularly.”

The positive effects of a head massage are particularly emphasized: “If a regular oil massage is performed in the head area, it strengthens hair and hair roots, natural hair color is preserved, and facial skin shines with radiant beauty. All the senses are sharpened, restful sleep and emotional balance are promoted. Problems such as headaches, hair loss or gray hair will not occur.”

Oil massages have a very soothing effect on the nervous system, because they calm the vata dosha, one of three control principles at the basis of body and mind. Therefore, it is especially recommended for people who are often nervous or frequently under stress.

Regular oil massages have an extremely soothing, calming and harmonizing effect on the nervous system.

Choose the massage oils according to your skin and hair type:
- VATA – for normal to dry skin and dry, brittle hair
- PITTA – for sensitive skin and thin, reddish hair
- KAPHA – for oily skin and hair

PREPARATION:
The massage can be performed standing or sitting. Take a large towel as a mat to avoid oil stains on the floor. Make sure the room is pleasantly warm. Ideally the oil should be preheated slightly above body temperature. To do this, put the oil container, a glass or plastic bottle, into a hot water bath for a short time.
The entire massage should be carried out with only light pressure. Massage slowly and evenly. Apply the oil directly to the skin or to the palm of your hand and distribute it. Massage with the whole hand, including palm, fingers and thumb. At the end of the abhyanga, a thin film of oil should cover the entire body. Should you have little time, do a quick massage of the crown of the head, the ears and soles of the feet rather than omitting the whole abhyanga.

1. **Start with the head, massage the scalp with small circular movements. Take some time for this important area.** Then massage the ears and face. You can now quickly distribute the oil over the rest of the body to give it enough time to sink into the skin.

2. **Then massage the neck and shoulders.** Remember to use the entire hand, including palm, fingers and thumb, not just the fingertips.

3. **Next, massage the arms, hands and fingers.** Massage the long bones with long upward and downward movements and the joints using a circular motion.

4. **The chest and abdominal area should then be very gently massaged.** Circular movements over the chest, straight up and down movements over the sternum and the solar plexus. Massage the belly with slow, circular clockwise movements around the navel.

5. **Massage the back as far as possible for you.** Here you can exert a little more pressure.

6. **The legs also can be massaged with a bit more pressure.** In the same manner as the arms: straight for the long bones and circling for the joints.

7. **Finally massage feet and soles.** Here the finger pressure can be increased. Ideally one should leave the oil on the skin for at least 15-20 minutes, before showering or taking a bath. This allows the body time to absorb the oil.