



What to Expect Studying **Massage** at NAKH Institute

NAKH Institute of Education – Our Journey

NAKH Institute of Education is Alberta's oldest massage therapy training college, with a history spanning more than 30 years. Our story began when the City of Edmonton approached our head instructor, Karim Kanji, to create a program that would elevate massage therapy from its early associations with parlour services into a respected clinical practice. What started as a small initiative has grown into a cornerstone of massage therapy education in Alberta, recognized by Alberta Education and trusted by thousands of students and graduates.

From the very beginning, Karim brought a unique vision to massage therapy training: to combine the wisdom of Eastern medicine—reflexology, acupressure, and energy balancing—with the precision of Western clinical science. This marriage of traditions has been the heart of our curriculum for over three decades. What sets our program apart is the foundational full-body massage routine Karim created and has refined year after year. This is not just a series of techniques pieced together; it is a carefully crafted sequence that emphasizes flow, rhythm, and continuity. Our students learn to provide treatments that feel seamless—where one movement leads naturally into the next—creating a massage experience that is both deeply therapeutic and profoundly restorative.

A Routine Perfected Over Time

While the core routine has remained a constant, we have continually deepened and enhanced it. Over decades of teaching, feedback from students, and the lived experiences of thousands of clients, we have polished this massage into something greater than the sum of its parts. Students are trained not only in where to place their hands, but in how to connect each stroke, transition smoothly between body areas, and maintain a therapeutic rhythm that calms the nervous system and addresses root causes of pain. This attention to flow distinguishes our graduates—clients consistently feel the difference between a choppy massage and one where every technique feels intentional and connected.

The beauty of this routine is that it serves as a foundation. Every other modality—whether lymphatic massage, sports massage, pregnancy massage, or kinetic cupping—is taught in relation to the original sequence. Students first master the flow, then learn how to adapt it: when to change pressure, when to modify techniques for safety, and when to integrate specialized methods. This ensures that no matter what style they practice, the massage retains a sense of continuity, professionalism, and therapeutic purpose.

Beyond Technique: Building Complete Professionals

We have always understood that technique alone does not make a successful massage therapist. That is why our curriculum expands into three interconnected pillars:

- **Scientific Literacy:** Courses in Anatomy & Physiology, Medical Terminology, Pathology, Illnesses & Diseases, and Pharmacology give students the tools to understand the human body in depth. They learn how massage interacts with muscles, fascia, circulation, and the nervous system, and how to recognize contraindications and work alongside other healthcare professionals.
- **Professionalism & Care:** Through Assessment & Ethics, Self-Care for Therapists, and trauma/diversity training, students learn to uphold boundaries, respect cultural differences, and provide care that is safe, ethical, and trauma-informed. We emphasize that massage therapy is a clinical, dignified profession rooted in compassion and respect.



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- **Business Knowledge:** With classes in Business Applications, Management, Accounting, and Marketing, we prepare our graduates to thrive not just as practitioners but also as entrepreneurs and leaders. They understand how to open a practice, manage a clinic, or navigate the requirements of insurance billing and extended health benefits.

Curriculum Flow: From Foundation to Specialization

Our curriculum is intentionally structured to mirror the flowing nature of the massage routine itself. Each course connects back to the foundation and expands the student's understanding step by step:

- **Foundational Sciences & Professionalism**
 - **Intro to Anatomy & Physiology, Medical Terminology, Pathology, Illnesses & Diseases, Pharmacology for Massage Therapy** — These courses provide the medical and scientific grounding that supports every massage technique. Students learn how the body functions, how disease impacts it, and how massage interacts with these systems.
 - **Assessment, Treatment Planning, Ethics & Self-Care for Therapists** — Early in the program, students also establish professional boundaries and personal resilience, ensuring they can care for clients while protecting their own well-being.
- **The Core Massage Routine**
 - **Relaxation Massage** — The heart of our program and the starting point for all students. Here, the full-body massage routine is introduced and perfected, with a strong emphasis on flow, continuity, and rhythm.
- **Building Specialized Modalities on the Routine**
 - **Breast Massage, Lymphatic Massage, Seated Chair Massage, Basic Baby Massage** — Each specialty adapts the foundational routine to unique populations or specific therapeutic goals, while still maintaining flow and clinical safety.
 - **Deep Tissue Massage, Concepts in Hydrotherapy Massage, Orthopaedic Massage, Pregnancy Massage, Sports Massage, Kinetic Cupping** — These advanced courses teach students how to layer techniques onto the routine, adjusting depth, pressure, tools, and methods to meet client needs while still preserving seamless transitions and therapeutic outcomes.
- **Integrating Clinical Context**
 - **Therapeutic Massage, Therapeutic Exercise** — Students move beyond technique into treatment planning, rehabilitation, and exercise prescription, reinforcing their role as healthcare professionals.
- **Business & Professional Readiness**
 - **Intro to Management, Business Applications, Business Management, Introduction to Accounting, Business Marketing** — Finally, students gain the tools to succeed in practice, whether by running their own clinic or managing within an existing business. This includes navigating municipal, provincial, and federal regulations, insurance companies, extended health benefits, and fraud prevention.

Through this curriculum flow, students are never learning techniques in isolation. Instead, every new skill is integrated into the existing massage framework, ensuring that by graduation, they can deliver treatments that are effective, ethical, adaptable, and above all—seamless.



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Here is a breakdown of our courses and what you will be learning throughout the program:

Year 1 – Foundations (1200 Hours)

- **Anatomy, Physiology & Terminology (ANAT101):** Students will gain a foundational understanding of the human body, including major systems, muscles, bones, and joints. This knowledge provides the scientific base for safe and effective massage therapy practice.
- **Women's Health and Hormonal Wellness (ANAT121):** This course explores the unique considerations for female clients, including menstrual, reproductive, and hormonal health. Students will learn techniques to support wellness and manage common concerns safely and effectively.
- **Ethics of Therapeutic Touch (ETHC100):** Students will develop a clear understanding of professional ethics, boundaries, and client communication, including informed consent, confidentiality, and professional responsibilities in a therapeutic environment.
- **Trauma-Informed Massage (ETHC127):** Focused on understanding trauma and its impact on the body and client experience, students will learn how to provide safe, sensitive, and empowering care for clients who have experienced trauma.
- **Self-Care for Therapists (HLTH102):** Students will explore techniques for maintaining their own health and wellness, including ergonomics, stretching, and strategies to prevent work-related injury or burnout.
- **Business Applications (MGMT107) and Business Marketing (MGMT331):** These courses introduce the fundamentals of running a massage practice, including client relations, record keeping, professional marketing, and business communication skills.
- **Integrated Client Assessment & Treatment Planning (MSTY100):** Students will learn how to conduct thorough client assessments, develop treatment plans, and apply clinical reasoning to tailor massage therapy to individual needs.
- **Relaxation Massage (MSTY105), Lymphatic Massage (MSTY121), and Seated Chair Massage (MSTY133):** These practical courses provide hands-on experience in fundamental massage techniques, including general relaxation, lymphatic drainage, and workplace-focused seated massage.
- **Therapeutic Massage (MSTY205):** Students will refine their massage skills, focusing on effective therapeutic techniques for a variety of common conditions and client presentations.
- **Pathology of Diseases, Illness, and Disorders (PATH201) and Pharmacology for Massage Therapy (PHAR311):** These courses provide students with the knowledge to understand common medical conditions and medications, including contraindications, precautions, and safe treatment planning.
- **Clinical Lab Hours (MSTY150) and Field Placement (MSTY199):** Students will gain supervised practical experience, applying classroom knowledge to real client care while developing confidence and professional competence.
- **Exam Week (MSTYEXAM1):** Students complete final written and practical assessments to demonstrate mastery of Year 1 content.



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Year 2 – Advanced Clinical Practice (1250 Hours)

- **Advanced Boundary Management (ETHC220):** Students will deepen their understanding of professional boundaries, communication strategies, and ethical decision-making in complex clinical scenarios.
- **Diversity & Health Equity (ETHC254):** This course examines how culture, identity, and social determinants of health influence client care, preparing students to provide inclusive and equitable treatments.
- **Therapeutic Exercise (HLTH231):** Students will learn to prescribe safe and effective stretching, strengthening, and mobility exercises that complement massage treatments and support client rehabilitation.
- **Business Management (MGMT204):** This course covers the operational requirements of managing or running a practice, including workflow, client relations, and professional communication.
- **Introduction to Accounting (MGMT310):** Students will gain foundational financial skills, including budgeting, bookkeeping, payroll concepts, and basic accounting for clinic operations.
- **Deep Tissue Massage (MSTY207):** Students will refine tissue-specific and advanced palpation techniques to address chronic tension, adhesions, and musculoskeletal dysfunction safely and effectively.
- **Breast Massage (MSTY210):** This specialized course teaches safe, ethical, and client-centered techniques for breast tissue treatment, including positioning, indications, and informed consent.
- **Concepts in Hydrotherapy Massage (MSTY212):** Students will explore therapeutic uses of heat, cold, water, and contrast applications and learn to integrate hydrotherapy into clinical treatment plans.
- **Orthopaedic Massage (MSTY220):** This course focuses on assessment and treatment strategies for orthopaedic conditions, including biomechanical analysis and special testing.
- **Pregnancy Massage (MSTY237):** Students will develop competency in treating clients throughout pregnancy, learning safe positioning, modifications, and considerations for all trimesters.
- **Sports Massage (MSTY241):** Students will learn pre-event, post-event, and maintenance techniques to support athletic performance, recovery, and injury prevention.
- **Kinetic Cupping (MSTY252):** This course introduces movement-based cupping techniques that improve circulation, fascial mobility, and tissue health while emphasizing safety and contraindications.
- **Basic Baby Massage (MSTY277):** Students will learn gentle infant massage techniques and how to teach parents safe methods for bonding, comfort, and relaxation.
- **Clinical Lab Hours (MSTY250):** Students will apply advanced assessment and treatment skills in a supervised clinical setting, gaining confidence and competence through direct client care.
- **Field Placement – 250 Hours (MSTY299):** Students will participate in an extended practicum in professional clinical environments, integrating theoretical knowledge with real-world experience.
- **Research Project (MSTY600):** Students will complete an evidence-informed research project, developing skills in research interpretation and application to massage therapy practice.
- **Exam Week (MSTYEXAM2):** Students complete written and practical examinations demonstrating advanced knowledge and readiness to enter the profession.



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Staying True While Evolving

Massage therapy has changed dramatically over the past 30 years, evolving from an alternative wellness option into a recognized component of healthcare. We have evolved with it. Our curriculum has grown to meet this shift, with deeper emphasis on working alongside other health professionals, adopting trauma-informed care, and ensuring students understand contraindications, professional boundaries, and client safety. We ensure students are aware of municipal, provincial, and federal regulations, insurance requirements, and professional standards. We prepare them for today's realities while we remain committed to our roots in holistic healing—teaching therapists to address root causes rather than symptoms, and to see the client as a whole person.

Community Integration & Real-World Learning

Our students work with diverse populations through partnerships with community organizations and charities. They experience the differences between baby and geriatric massage, learn when and how to adapt for pregnancy, and recognize situations where massage is contraindicated. From baby massage to geriatric care, from prenatal to sports rehabilitation, we expose students to diverse client needs and conditions. While no program can replicate every situation they will encounter in practice, we strive to prepare them with as many real-world examples and scenarios as possible. This exposure prepares them for the variety of clients they will encounter in practice.

Supporting Adult Learners

We know that many of our students are adult learners—our average student age is 38. Many balance families, jobs, and the pursuit of a new career. That is why we have adopted a hybrid learning model, combining in-person clinical training with a robust online platform (Microsoft Teams) that provides 24/7 access, which gives students access to materials, assignments, grades, and resources anytime. This flexibility has improved attendance, engagement, and learning outcomes, while also enhancing transparency and accountability for both students and faculty.

Our Legacy

Over more than three decades, we have graduated over 1,000 Registered Massage Therapists who have gone on to lead in clinics, spas, care facilities, and private practices. They carry forward the philosophy we have always taught: that massage is not about chasing pain or massaging where it hurts, but about finding root causes, restoring balance, and delivering lasting relief through skilled, flowing, and ethical care.

Today, NAKH Institute of Education stands as a recognized leader in massage therapy training, highlighted by Alberta Education – Private Career Colleges for excellence in teaching and clinical preparation. For over 30 years, we have upheld our mission: to blend the wisdom of holistic traditions with the rigor of clinical science, and to graduate massage therapists who are ethical, skilled, resilient, and ready to make a lasting difference in their clients' lives.



What to Expect Starting Massage at NAKH Institute

Welcome to Advanced Massage Therapy at NAKH Institute of Education! As you embark on your journey in the massage therapy program, it's important to familiarize yourself with what to expect throughout your studies. This document outlines key information regarding the dress code, Microsoft Teams, and frequently asked questions (FAQs) about the program.

Dress Code

Maintaining a professional appearance is essential in the massage therapy field. Our dress code is designed to reflect professionalism while ensuring comfort and safety.

General Guidelines:

- **Attire:** Students are expected to wear professional, clean, and modest clothing. Comfortable athletic wear, scrubs, or fitted t-shirts with pants are recommended for practical classes.
- **Footwear:** Closed-toe shoes with a non-slip sole are required for all practical classes and in-house clinics. Sandals or open-toe shoes are not permitted.
- **Hygiene:** Personal hygiene is important. Students should maintain a neat appearance, and ensure nails are clean and trimmed. Strong fragrances should be avoided to accommodate clients with sensitivities.
- **Hair and Accessories:** Hair should be tied back if long to maintain professionalism and hygiene. Minimal and non-distracting jewelry is encouraged.

Information for Microsoft Teams

Microsoft Teams is our primary platform for communication, collaboration, and resource sharing within the massage therapy program.

Key Features:

- **Class Channels:** Each class will have a dedicated channel where announcements, class materials, and resources will be shared. Please check these channels regularly for updates.
- **Assignments and Submissions:** Instructions for assignments, deadlines, and submission guidelines will be posted in the appropriate channels. Be sure to follow the guidelines carefully.
- **Communication:** You can communicate with your peers and instructors through chat, meetings, or posts within the channels. Engaging in discussions is encouraged to foster a collaborative learning environment.
- **Resources:** Relevant documents, such as course outlines, handouts, and recordings of lectures, will be available in Teams for easy access.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. What are the class sizes like?

- Class sizes may vary, but we aim to maintain small class numbers (a maximum of 12-15) to ensure individualized attention and support from instructors.

2. How is the program structured?

- The program typically includes a combination of academic classes, practical labs, and hands-on experiences in clinics and outreach settings. This holistic approach prepares you for real-world practice.



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Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

3. What can I expect in practical classes?

- In practical classes, you will engage in hands-on learning, where you will practice techniques on fellow students and models. Expect a supportive environment where feedback and collaboration are encouraged.

4. What types of assessments can I expect?

- Assessments may include practical exams, written assignments, quizzes, and participation in discussions. These are designed to evaluate both your theoretical knowledge and practical skills.

5. Are there any outreach opportunities?

- Yes, students will have the chance to participate in in-house workshops and outreach programs. These experiences provide valuable exposure to working with clients in diverse settings and help develop your professional skills.

6. How do I handle scheduling conflicts?

- If you encounter a scheduling conflict, communicate with your instructor as soon as possible to discuss potential solutions or accommodations.

7. What if I have questions or need assistance?

- Always feel free to reach out to your instructors through Microsoft Teams or email. You can also text us at the main school line 780-461-6708. We are here to support you throughout your learning journey.

Additional Topics to Consider

Program Duration and Schedule:

- The massage therapy program typically spans 16 months, comprising both classroom learning and practical experience. You can expect a structured schedule with classes, labs, and clinical sessions. We'll provide you with a sample weekly schedule to help you plan your time effectively.

Costs and Financial Considerations:

- Tuition fees for the program will be clearly outlined at the time of enrollment, along with any additional costs for materials or equipment. We will also guide you on available scholarships, grants, and loan options to assist you in financing your education.
 - Year 1 - \$10,430 + \$995 = \$11,425
 - Year 2 - \$10,000 + \$ 995 = \$10,995

Required Supplies and Equipment:

- For practical classes, we provide all necessary materials and equipment, so you only need to bring your own documentation tools, such as notebooks, pens, a tablet, computer etc.
- Textbooks are optional to purchase, as we have a well-stocked library that you can utilize, along with access to various online resources to support your learning.

Expectations for Self-Care and Wellness:

- We recognize the physical and emotional demands of the massage therapy program. Self-care is crucial, and we encourage you to utilize resources available for stress management and wellness throughout your studies. Its also crucial to maintain hygiene to ensure a comfortable experience for your clients and peers.

Networking and Professional Development:

- We will highlight opportunities for networking and professional development, such as attending workshops and events in the field. Engaging with professionals and alumni can help you build connections and explore career paths.



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Clinical Experience:

- In-house clinics will provide you with hands-on experience working with real clients. You'll have the opportunity to apply your skills while receiving guidance and support from experienced instructors.

Health and Safety Protocols:

- We prioritize the health and safety of our students and clients. You will be informed about any health protocols, including hygiene practices and safety guidelines to follow in clinical settings.

Support Services:

- We offer a range of support services, including academic advising, counseling, and wellness programs. These resources are designed to help you manage challenges and enhance your learning experience.

Post-Graduation Opportunities:

- Our career services team will provide assistance with resume writing, and interview preparation to support you as you transition into the workforce.

Alumni Network:

- We encourage you to connect with our alumni network for mentorship and insights into their professional experiences. Alumni can provide valuable guidance as you navigate your career.

Starting your journey in the massage therapy program at the NAKH Institute of Education is an exciting opportunity for personal and professional growth. By adhering to the dress code, utilizing Microsoft Teams effectively, and understanding the structure of the program, you will be well-prepared for your studies. We look forward to supporting you as you develop your skills and knowledge in massage therapy.

If you have any additional questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to your instructors or support staff.