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## Should a Christian go to a Reflexologist?

**W**e are pastors in a non-denominational church . . . We had a couple from our church [recommend a reflexologist to] us . . . and want to [give] it to us as a gift. Could you please advise us as to what to do and how to handle it with them if we don't go [to the reflexologist] . . . so as not to hurt their feelings by not accepting their gift? Thank you and God bless your ministry."

This letter actually asks two questions. The first has to do with whether or not a Christian should utilize the

services of a reflexologist. The second refers to how one should handle this delicate situation in which there is a high risk of offending those making the offer—should the recipients choose to decline it. Here are three questions to consider when dealing with an issue such as this.

**1. Does Scripture directly forbid you?** The answer to this question is discovered through examining and understanding God's Word. Obviously, if the practice involves contact with the occult, you

should not have anything to do with it. This is made clear in Deuteronomy 18:9-15

"There shall not be found among you any one . . . that useth divination, or an ob-

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## Cell Phones: Are They a Health Hazard?

**A**s cell phones have gained in popularity over the last decade, there have been increasing concerns voiced as to



whether or not the electromagnetic radiation they emit poses a health hazard. Of greatest concern is that these devices, since they are held so close to the head, may contribute to brain cancer (which has been on the rise in recent years).

To date, there have been little data to support such concerns. Perhaps this is simply due to the fact that heavy cell phone use has not been in existence long

enough for significant cancer studies to be conducted. That may change soon. This year, a 13-country study of brain and other head and neck cancers in cell-phone users will begin under the auspices of a Lyon, France cancer research organization. Meanwhile, other studies point to the possibility of harmful effects.

Just this year, the Swedish National Institute

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## Christians and Reflexology . . . (continued from page 1)

server of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee . . . For these nations, which thou shalt possess, hearkened unto observers of times, and unto diviners: but as for thee, the Lord thy God hath not suffered thee so to do.”

Notice that this passage not only addresses the method (“that useth divination . . .”), but also the practitioner. Therefore, caution should not only be exercised with regard to the type of treatment, but also with regard to who is doing it. The treatment itself may not be overtly occult-relat-

ed, but the individual utilizing it may be.

If the answer to this question is yes, then there is no need to go further. On the other hand, if that is not the case, there are still several other factors to consider.

**2. Is the Holy Spirit warning you against it?** Perhaps you are not aware of any Scriptural prohibition against the practice, but you still do not have complete peace in your heart about proceeding. Remember that the Holy Spirit does not tend to yell. Instead, He speaks softly to your heart. As a result, when you are considering a direction that is contrary to His will, you will often feel a subtle uneasiness, or a caution about proceeding. It is important to heed this warning! I have spoken with many people after they have made medical decisions that they regretted and, in almost every case, they can recall a time in the decision process when they wondered if God was cautioning them.

**3. Is its foundation incompatible with the Christian faith?** Despite the fact that Scripture may not forbid a particular practice, its underlying concepts and philosophy may not be compatible with Biblical faith.

#### 4. Is it scientifically sound?

Has it been proven by objective studies? Are its premises consistent with natural law?

These last two questions tend to be much more difficult to answer, since most people (including the practitioners themselves) are often unaware of the history and philosophy underlying a medical system. Now here are some thoughts regarding reflexology.

Reflexology is based upon several concepts. The body is divided up into zones of energy; energy is transmitted through the body via invisible channels, and these ten channels are all present in the soles of the feet. Furthermore, the feet are a “microcosm” of the human body. In other words, all of the body’s organs can be mapped out on the soles of the feet. Therefore, abnormalities of those organs can be diagnosed and treated through palpating (i.e. feeling the feet with the hands).

These concepts are rooted in Taoism, the Chinese religion that was developed around 200 BC and underlies the practice of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM). Taoism rejects the concept of a personal Creator to whom man is to look regarding all matters in life (including health). Instead, Taoism proposes that the



universe is made up of energy, that this energy travels through living beings—such as man—via channels, and that optimum health is obtained when that energy is able to travel through us in an unhindered manner. Disease comes as a result of blockage of this energy flow. Therefore, the cure for any disease is to identify the “blocked” energy channel and remove the blockage so that this healing energy force can flow freely once again. TCM attempts to “unblock” such points with the use of several methods, including acupuncture, acupressure and moxibustion (the burning of herbs or use of suction cups).

To my knowledge, the “energy channels” of TCM have never been found. Furthermore, there are no objective studies demonstrating the validity of reflexology, i.e. that you can diagnose and treat internal problems through the soles of the feet.

Now, let’s apply our four questions to answer, Should  
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## Seminar Schedule

The Word on Health  
Cincinnati, OH. . . Sept. 14-16  
Prophecy Conference  
Lancaster, PA . . . Oct. 26-28  
Keystone Bible Institute  
Chambersburg, PA March 1-3  
ICBCT Spiritual Warfare  
Conference  
Bristol, TN March 7-10

For more information on upcoming Provident seminars, to request a seminar in your area, or to register for a seminar noted above, contact the Provident offices at (513) 891-7925.

## Christians and Reflexology . . . (continued from page 2)

a Christian go to a reflexologist? (1) Does Scripture forbid it? I think not. Despite its Taoist concepts, I do not believe that one engaging in reflexology is necessarily dabbling in the occult. Therefore, I do not consider it to be a “banned” practice, such as those in Deuteronomy. That is not to say

that I agree with it, or that I think it is a valid method. (2) Is the Holy Spirit forbidding you? This is a personal question that I cannot answer for you. See the discussion under point #2 above. (3) Obviously, the foundation of reflexology is not compatible with the Christian faith. (4) Reflex-

ology does not appear to be scientifically sound. Therefore, in general, I think that Christians should abstain from its use.

In this discussion, I attempted to address whether or not a Christian should utilize reflexology by giving you principles to consider when evaluating any med-

ical practice in the light of your faith. In an upcoming issue, I hope to give you some ideas on how you can decline an offer for treatment that you consider objectionable in such a way as to avoid unnecessary offense. Have you ever been in such a situation? How did you handle it? **VS**

## Breast Cancer Risk Higher with Most Commonly-Recommended HRT

**I**n March of this year, *Vital Signs* reported on the landmark HERS study, which showed that heart disease was not reduced for women on hormone replacement therapy (HRT). This study was a strong reproof to the medical community, which has for years been pressuring menopausal women to go on HRT in order to reduce their risk of heart disease.

This month we report on another important concept commonly perpetuated by the medical community (myself included, since this is the way that I was taught for nearly 20 years). This concept states that women on estrogen need to “balance” the estrogen with progesterone. If they don’t, this “unopposed estrogen” is thought to increase their risk for cancer of the breast and endometrium (uterus).

A recent study from the National Cancer Institute seriously questions this dogma.

2082 women who were found to have breast cancer during a follow-up analysis of the nationwide Breast Cancer Detection Demonstration Project (1973-1980), were followed up once again to determine their use of estrogen and/or progesterone hormones. The results of this study were significant.

**1. Increased risk of breast cancer was related primarily to recent hormone use.** For those who had taken HRT in the past, but had stopped several years previously, their risk was minimally elevated.

**2. The relative risk for breast cancer was increased 10 percent in women who used estrogen HRT alone.** The most common form of estrogen used was Premarin. However, this in-

creased risk was primarily confined to women who were lean. Those who were heavy did not have a further increased risk of breast cancer by using estrogen. Note: Other studies have demonstrated that women who are obese have an increased risk of breast cancer independent of hormone use. This may be because increased fat stores actually produce their own estrogen.

**3. The relative risk for breast cancer was increased by 30 percent in those who used a combination of estrogen and synthetic progesterone.** The most common form was medroxyprogesterone acetate (such as in Provera).

**4. For women who took estrogen alone, the risk of breast cancer was primarily confined to lean women** (i.e. those with a body mass index (BMI) of less than 24.4



kg/sq meter). Women who were heavy did not increase their risk of breast cancer by taking estrogen.

The bottom line: hormone replacement therapy (HRT) after menopause may carry with it significant risk. Yes, it may help to reduce osteoporosis (although this benefit is only limited). But, it may come at a high price: increased risk of breast cancer. That risk may be even greater for women who take synthetic progesterone in addition to estrogen. **VS**

C. Schairer, J. Lubin, R. Troisi, S. Sturgeon, L. Brinton and R. Hoover (2000). Menopausal estrogen and estrogen-progestin replacement therapy and breast cancer risk. *Jama*. 283 (4): 485-91.

## Cell Phones . . . (continued from page 1)



for Working Life recently unveiled data on 17,000 Nordic cell-phone users. Twenty percent linked the use of cell phones to headaches and recurring fatigue. Other symptoms, such as dizziness, memory problems, difficulty concentrating, etc. were even more common

It now seems quite certain that cell-phone radio frequency (CPRF) does have

biological effects. Last April, Alan W. Preece of the University of Bristol in England published a study in which he demonstrated that CPRF-like emissions affected the time it took users to answer simple questions. W. Ross Adey of the University of California, Riverside reported that CPRF affects the function of an enzyme. He has also observed tumors in rats exposed to CPRF for long periods.

An expert panel, consisting of 12 physicians, scientists and lay members, recently convened in Britain. They concluded that, "it is not possible at present to say that exposure to [cell-phone] radiation . . . is totally without potential

adverse health effects."

While you wait for researchers to tell the rest of the story, you might consider the following prudent steps—just in case it is confirmed that CPRF is harmful to your health.

**1. Use a headset.** Many newer cell phones contain jacks for a headset. My personal preference is an earbud with a microphone and button that is manufactured by Samsung. Combined with the voice dial feature of my cell phone, I am often able to make calls without even touching the keypad - a real driving safety feature as well.

**2. Don't wear your phone against your body.** Carry your cell phone in your purse or attaché. I only clip

it to my belt when I have no other means of carrying it.

**3. Use digital over analog.** The older analog phones have much higher RF emissions, which are emitted in a continuous signal. The newer, digital phones utilize discrete bursts of energy. Overall, analog phones beam eight times as much energy into your head as digital phones.

**4. Don't allow your children to make calls on the cell phone unless it is for safety purposes.** This is a recommendation straight from the British expert panel referred to earlier.

J. Raloff (2000). Researchers Probe Cell-Phone Effects. *Science News*. 157 (7): 100. J. Raloff (2000). Two studies offer some cell-phone cautions. *Science News*. 157 (21): 326. **VS**

## Should I Obtain Genetic Testing on My Baby?

**R**ead through the following letter; how would you answer their questions? Send me your ideas, and next month I will publish my answer . . . and perhaps some of yours as well!

"My doctor has recommended that I have an amniocentesis in order to test my unborn baby for genetic defects. What do you think? Can anything be done about it even if it comes up positive?"

## About Vital Signs

Vital Signs is published monthly and includes reports on recent and classic medical research from a perspective balanced by biblical principle. Its purpose is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ through strengthening the faith of His disciples by demonstrating the relevance of Scripture to the realm of health care.

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To obtain information on PMI publications such as Vital Signs, or to inquire about Dr. Jacobson's speaking schedule, you may contact Provident Medical Institute at the above address, call (513) 891-7925, send a fax to (513) 891-7926, or e-mail to provident@sprint-mail.com.

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