

## 1. History of Reflexology

- 1.1. The very beginning of reflexology history according to ancient Chinese records, Buddhist monks brought early reflexology from India to China about 5000 years ago.
- 1.2. Just under 5000 years ago many ancient Chinese books talk about techniques that are similar and sometimes identical to modern reflexology eg. they practiced the "examining foot method".
- 1.3. There are also many references in a treasured ancient text called 'The Great Yellow Emperors Medical Book' (The Inner Cannon, The Classic of Internal Medicine).
- 1.4. The information in this text is still used by Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners all over the world today.
- 1.5. 4000 years ago there is evidence of some form of foot and hand therapy being practiced in Egypt as depicted in the tomb of Ankmahor. Found in the tomb of Egyptian Vizier (second in charge after the king) *Ankmahor*, were many pictures of different tradespeople, people making jewelry and craftsman.
- 1.6. In the room dedicated to medical pictures they found one of the people practicing something that looks a lot like reflexology.
- 1.7. One man having his feet receiving reflexology, another his finger. Underneath the picture is this writing, (rough translation) the patient is saying "*do not cause pain*" and the physician replies "*I will give you only pleasure*"



- 1.8. The North American tribes of the First Nation People are known to have practiced a form of foot therapy for hundreds of years.
- 1.9. The dictionary definition of a 'Reflex' is 'an involuntary or instinctive movement in response to a stimulus' or in the sense of reflection or mirror image.

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- 1.10. The reflexes on our feet and hands act as mirror images of the body's – a microcosm of the whole body.
- 1.11. Zone Therapy was used as far back as 1500 AD. The re-discovery of some form of systemised foot treatment is accredited to Dr William Fitzgerald who called it Zone Therapy and drew it to the attention of the medical world between 1915 and 1917.
- 1.12. During the 16th Century a number of books were published on Zone Therapy, one was written by Dr Adamus and Dr A'tatis and another by Dr Ball in Leipzig.
- 1.13. The first use of the word 'reflex' with reference to motor reactions was used by the German physiologist Johann August Unzer in 1771. In 1883 Marshall Hall, an English physiologist introduced the concept and term 'reflex action'.
- 1.14. In the late 1880s, neurology as a branch of science became a field of its own. Often articles regarding the most up-to-date research on reflex action were published in England in 'Brain' - a Journal of Neurology. One article 'Reflex Action as a Cause of Disease and Means of Cure' by Dr. T. Lauter Brunton discussed the beneficial use of inducing a blister on the skin for the healing of internal problems.
- 1.15. Sir Henry Head (an English physiologist) was able to chart areas according to the spinal segment to which they belonged. After years of research he established the Head zones, which are labeled in anatomy books today as dermatomes. Head's work conclusively proved the neurological relationship that exists between the skin and the internal organs.
- 1.16. The Russians pursued the study of reflexology both from the psychological and physiological point of view. Russian work with reflexes began with Ivan Pavlov's (1849-1936) theory of conditioned reflex response which earned him the Nobel Prize in 1904. His famous theory was a reflex action was a simple and direct relationship between a stimulus and a response (the ringing of a bell and a dog salivating).
- 1.17. It was in 1915 that an article entitled 'To stop that toothache, squeeze your toe' was published in 'Everybody's Magazine', written by Edwin Bowers, which first brought Dr Fitzgerald's work on Zone Therapy before the public.
- 1.18. In 1917, Dr Fitzgerald wrote 'Zone Therapy or Relieving Pain in the Home'. Two years later, they enlarged this book and published it under a second title 'Zone Therapy or Curing Pain and Disease'.
- 1.19. Dr William Fitzgerald (1872 – 1942) received his medical degree from the University of Vermont in 1895. He practiced in Boston City Hospital for two and a half years before going to London where he spent two years at the Central London Nose and Throat hospital before taking up a position in Vienna as Assistant to Professors Politzer and Chiari, who were highly respected doctors.
- 1.20. Dr Ada Politzer (1835 – 1920) of the University of Vienna, was a well-

known author of many medical books and made clinical contributions to the diagnosis and treatment of diseases of the ear.

- 1.21. Dr Fitzgerald never published the original sources for his own therapy, but it is likely that he was influenced during this time in Vienna, by the work of Dr d'Arsonval. In 'Zone Therapy is Scientific' by Dr W D Chesney, it is stated that in Germany, Dr d'Arsonval was using physiotherapy and getting relief following the use of reflex knowledge, which, in effect, was what was later termed Zone Therapy by Drs Fitzgerald and Bowers.
- 1.22. When Dr Fitzgerald returned to the United States, he became head of the Nose and Throat Department at St Francis Hospital, Hartford, Connecticut. Around 1909, Dr Fitzgerald discovered, or re-discovered Zone Therapy. Almost ten years later.
- 1.23. Dr Fitzgerald wrote his book, about how he had stumbled upon the concept of Zone Therapy: "Six years ago I accidentally discovered that pressure with a cotton tipped probe on the muco-cutinous margin (where the skin joins the mucous membrane) of the nose gave an anesthetic result as though a cocaine solution had been applied. I further found that there were many spots in the nose, mouth, throat and on both surfaces of the tongue, which, when pressed firmly, deadened definite areas of sensation. Also, that pressure exerted over any bony eminence of the hands, feet or over the joints, produces the same characteristic results in pain relief. I found also that when pain was relieved, the condition that produced the pain was most generally relieved. This led to my 'mapping out' these various areas and their associated connections and also to noting the conditions influenced through them. This science I have named "Zone Therapy".
- 1.24. It is worth noting that the Chinese had, in Acupuncture, divided the body into longitudinal Meridians by approximately 2,500 B.C.
- 1.25. The physiotherapist working with Dr Riley at St Petersburg, was Eunice Ingham (1889 – 1974). Eunice Ingham extended the work of Dr Fitzgerald and painstakingly mapped the feet with all the corresponding organs and glands of the body. She was a real pioneer who was determined to help people to help themselves, if their doctor was not using reflexology. In the early years, she worked with doctors to prove her findings and to demonstrate to them that reflexology was a useful diagnostic tool.



*Author and Lecturer*  
**EUNICE D. INGHAM STOPFEL**  
Feb. 24, 1889 — Dec. 10, 1974

- 1.26. She lectured at a medical clinic headed by Dr Charles Epstein in May 1939. In his report, he acknowledged that reflexology worked. However, while they knew it worked, doctors were not interested in using it, because reflexology was too time consuming and they could not make as much money.
- 1.27. Eunice Ingham is still known as the pioneer of modern reflexology and she authored two well-known books "Stories the Feet Can Tell" and "Stories the Feet Have Told". They have since been combined into one volume. In addition to her writing and lecturing, she, along with her nephew, Dwight Byers, founded the International Institute so that her work could be continued in perpetuity.
- 1.28. Throughout her forty years of experience treating many thousands of people, Eunice Ingham devised a system of techniques which enable the practitioner to contact the reflexes in the most effective and economic way. This system is known as the "Original Ingham Method"
- 1.29. Eunice Ingham died in 1974, having devoted forty years of her life to reflexology.