



# 7 Abdominal Bodywork Techniques



## 1. Breathwork

This term covers a wide variety of techniques used to help a person become more aware of breath. It's also used to release abdominal and respiratory muscle tension which interferes with healthy respiration. These techniques include rebirthing, the Buteyko method, Reichian reathwork, and holotropic breathwork. For more information, visit [www.ibfnetwork.com](http://www.ibfnetwork.com), the website of the International Breathwork Foundation.

## 2. Chi Nei Tsang

This Eastern visceral bodywork is a method of internal organ therapy using gentle massage and precise manipulation of the internal organs. Practitioners claim it strengthens and detoxifies internal organs; improves digestion, elimination, and

weight loss; corrects postural problems; releases deep emotional tensions; relieves abdominal pain; reduces fibroids, menstrual cramps, and endometriosis pain; and recycles negative energy. For more information, visit [www.chineitsang.com](http://www.chineitsang.com).

## 3. Core Awareness

This somatic approach to learning about the iliopsoas was developed by movement teacher and bodyworker Liz Koch. Students learn how to deepen their awareness of the core muscles, especially the iliopsoas; about the many causes of chronic iliopsoas tension and the effects of that tension; and how to release, lengthen, and tone the iliopsoas. For more information, visit [www.coreawareness.com](http://www.coreawareness.com).

## 4. Hara Shiatsu

This system of abdominal massage, based on principles of acupuncture, originated in China and has been developed in its modern form by Naoichi Kuzome, a Japanese shiatsu therapist. The abdomen is seen as a reflection of a person's entire physical and energetic health, and tension in the abdominal muscles is thought to be caused by poor diet, stress, bad posture, or incorrect exercise. The hara shiatsu practitioner uses gentle-to-firm pressure to treat muscle tension, referred pain, constipation, and energy blockages in the abdominal area. Hara shiatsu also includes therapeutic exercises to relieve excess abdominal tension and encourage proper breathing. For more information, check out *Hara Diagnosis: Reflections on the Sea*, by Kiiko Matsumoto and Steven Birch, available at [www.paradigm-pubs.com](http://www.paradigm-pubs.com) and [www.kiiko.com](http://www.kiiko.com).

## 5. Maya Abdominal Massage

Developed by Dr. Rosemary Arvigo, this gentle manipulation of the abdomen aims to treat the prolapsed, fallen, or tilted uterus, benign prostatic hypertrophy, pelvic and abdominal adhesions, and tight abdominal muscles, and can also benefit digestive disorders. Maya techniques guide internal organs into their proper position and relieve pelvic congestion and pain. For more information, visit [www.arvigomassage.com](http://www.arvigomassage.com).

## 6. Visceral Manipulation

This modality was developed by French osteopath Jean-Pierre Barral, who believes that when one organ cannot move in harmony with surrounding tissues and viscera due to adhesions, displacement, or abnormal tone, then fixed abnormal points of tension are created. These points of tension then pave the way for dysfunction and disease in many systems of the body. Gentle, specifically placed manual forces are used to identify and treat areas of restriction, and to encourage the normal motility, tone, and motion of the viscera and their connective tissues. For more information, visit [www.barralinstitute.com](http://www.barralinstitute.com).

## 7. Wurn Technique

This technique, a combination of manual physical therapy and massage techniques, was developed by Belinda and Larry Burns, and is used to decrease adhesions in the reproductive tract; treat pelvic and abdominal pain, such as pain from endometriosis, and open blocked fallopian tubes; treat poor digestion or elimination; improve alignment, balance, and mobility in the lower back, pelvis, and abdomen; and improve sexual functioning. For more information, visit [www.clearpassage.com](http://www.clearpassage.com).