

## BENEFITS OF MASSAGE

*By Dr. YES*

A soothing massage is an activity or inactivity, which many can relate to as wanting to experience at some time or other. Having a massage can help one unwind, but it has become a form of therapy that is pleasurable, relaxing and healthy.

Massage Therapy is a form of Physical Therapy, which utilizes a variety of motions to muscle and other soft tissue. Massage has been practiced for thousands of years and is generally considered part of complementary and alternative medicine. Today, massage is being widely promoted because it offers many benefits.

Some of the benefits of massage have been reported to assist in relaxation, provide stress relief, assist sport-related injuries and reduce pain and stiffness in joints and muscles. Other studies reveal that massage can be helpful in certain medical conditions and situations. These conditions can include blood pressure control, manage anxiety and depression, infant growth, increase circulation, boost immunity, sport-related injuries and cancer treatment.

Besides these benefits, the ultimate touch of massage can bring about a very comforting experience. Touch is an empowering sense that is important to humankind. It creates a sense of belonging, well-being and a profound level of communication beyond language. Touch can help console one who is grieving. It can nurture a growing child. It can also establish strong human ties.

There are over 80 different techniques for massage therapy, which can be used on different groups of people. One growing group seeking massage therapy is seniors. This is referred to as **Senior Massage**, otherwise known as Geriatric massage. Seniors experience aches and pains associated with getting older. Seniors tend to have problems associated with hands and feet and limited movement, especially those who are wheelchair bound. They can benefit with improved circulation, sensation and enhanced awareness with an extra sense of tender loving care.

A **pregnancy massage** is performed to help a woman whose body undergoes numerous physical, physiological and spiritual changes. The physical changes can cause stress and or discomfort to the mother. Massage is a nice way to help alleviate these discomforts and promotes a sense of well-being. The benefits a mother may experience are a reduction of swelling in the hands, feet and ankles, lessened sciatic pain, an ease in low back, neck and leg discomforts, toned muscle as well as relaxation of tense muscles, and an increase in flexibility. Expectant mothers can get help with relaxation, which could decrease insomnia. There are many but one notable benefit is an increase in oxygen in the blood, which can help deliver nutrients to baby and an increase in blood and lymph flow which can help eliminate toxin and decrease fatigue.



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**Athletic Massage** targets muscle and soft tissue care for the Athlete before and after an event. Before the event, massage can decrease stress. Using invigorating strokes, it can also promote athletic readiness, enhance a great sense of focus and can put one in a positive psychological “pump it up” attitude. It can help limber up soft tissue and joint to reduce injury during physical exertion. After the event, a massage can help reduce pain by stretching tight muscles and loosening up joints by moving them through proper range of motion. Massage can decrease soreness, break down scar tissue and can soothe the traumatized athletic. Massage will promote circulation, remove lactic acid from the muscle and hasten the healing process by reducing recovery time.

Regardless of all these benefits, be mindful that a massage isn't meant to replace regular chiropractic and/or medical care. Your chiropractic doctor or medical doctor should know that you are trying massage. Your doctor is trained with medical based information that includes extensive muscle, joint and soft tissue training and training in modalities of physical therapy. There are even some circumstances, when filing insurance claims, which require that only a doctor may render massage therapy. There are also some conditions where massage is not recommended. Be sure to follow your standard treatment plans that you have with your chiropractic doctor and/or medical doctors.

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