

# *The Benefits of Frequent Massage*

## A Powerful Health Ally

There's no denying the power of bodywork. Regardless of the adjectives we assign to it (pampering, rejuvenating, therapeutic) or the reasons we seek it out (a luxurious treat, stress relief, pain management), massage therapy can be a powerful ally in your healthcare regimen.

Researchers say the incredible benefits of massage are doubly powerful if taken in regular "doses." Professionals at the Touch Research Institute at the University of Miami explain the more massage you get, the greater benefits you reap. Here's why:

### **The Health Benefits**

Experts estimate that upwards of 90 percent of disease is stress-related. And perhaps nothing ages us faster, internally and externally, than high stress. While eliminating anxiety and pressure altogether in this fast paced world may be idealistic, massage can, without a doubt, help manage stress. This translates into:

- Decreased anxiety
- Enhanced sleep quality
- Greater energy
- Improved concentration
- Increased circulation
- Reduced fatigue

Furthermore, clients often report a sense of perspective and clarity after receiving a massage. The emotional balance bodywork provides can often be just as vital and valuable as the more tangible physical benefits.

In response to massage, specific physiological and chemical changes cascade throughout the body, with profound effects. Research shows that with massage:

- Asthmatic children show better pulmonary function.
- Arthritis sufferers note fewer aches and discomforts.
- Burn injury patients report reduced pain and anxiety.
- High blood pressure patients demonstrate lower diastolic blood pressure and stress hormones.
- Premenstrual syndrome sufferers have decreased water retention and cramping.
- Preterm infants have improved weight gain.

Research continues to show the enormous benefits of touch--which range from treating chronic diseases, neurological disorders, and injuries, to alleviating the tensions of modern lifestyles. Consequently, the medical community is actively embracing bodywork, and massage is becoming an integral part of hospice care and neonatal intensive care units. Many hospitals are also incorporating on-site massage practitioners and even spas to treat postsurgery or pain patients as part of the recovery process.

### **Help Yourself to Health**

Here's the beauty of bodywork: Its benefits are compounded when massage is utilized as a frequent therapy. The more you get, the more it does.

Taking part in this form of regularly-scheduled self-care plays a huge part in how healthy you'll be and how youthful you'll remain with each passing year. Budgeting time and money for bodywork at consistent intervals is truly an investment in your health. And remember: just because massage feels like a pampering treat doesn't mean it is any less therapeutic. Consider massage appointments a necessary piece of your health and wellness plan, and work with your practitioner to establish a treatment schedule that best meets your needs.



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