

## Help Yourself to Health

What exactly are the benefits of receiving massage or bodywork treatments? Useful for all of the conditions listed below and more,

**massage can:**

- Alleviate **low-back pain** and improve range of motion.
- Assist with shorter, easier labor for **expectant mothers** and shorten maternity hospital stays.
- Ease **medication dependence**.
- Enhance **immunity** by stimulating lymph flow—the body's natural defense system.
- Exercise and stretch **weak, tight, or atrophied muscles**.
- Help athletes of any level prepare for, and recover from, **strenuous workouts**.
- Improve the condition of the body's largest organ—the skin.
- Increase **joint flexibility**.
- Lessen **depression and anxiety**.
- Promote tissue regeneration, reducing **scar tissue and stretch marks**.
- Pump oxygen and nutrients into tissues and vital organs, improving **circulation**.
- Reduce **postsurgery adhesions** and swelling.
- Reduce **spasms and cramping**.
- Relax and soften injured, tired, and **overused muscles**.
- Release endorphins—the body's natural painkiller.
- Relieve **migraine** pain.

*To learn more about the many types of massage and bodywork, visit [www.massagetherapy.com](http://www.massagetherapy.com).*

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## The Benefits of Frequent Massage and Bodywork



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## A Powerful 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.

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:

Experts estimate that upwards of ninety 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.

## Profound Effects

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

- Arthritis sufferers note fewer aches and less stiffness and pain.
- Asthmatic children show better pulmonary function and increased peak air flow.
- Burn injury patients report reduced pain, itching, and anxiety.
- High blood pressure patients demonstrate lower diastolic blood pressure, anxiety, 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.

## Increase the Benefits with Frequent Visits

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 can play 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.

