



Therapeutic Benefits of Massage for Seniors

As we grow older, our bodies can start slowing down as we begin experiencing some of the pain and stiffness that comes with aging. However, staying physically active is vital for seniors because regular exercise can help improve mobility, flexibility and even your mental health. Try incorporating massage into your healthcare routine to see what benefits and relief you begin to experience yourself.

Massage Therapy for Seniors

According to a survey conducted by the American Massage Therapy Association, approximately 9 million people over age 55 had a total of 39 million massages in the last twelve months, mainly for medical purposes. Massage therapy for seniors can be an effective, non-invasive way to help alleviate some of the symptoms of many age-related conditions, especially when used to complement traditional medical services. With regular massage, seniors can experience an improved quality of life, increased energy levels and feel younger and healthier overall.

Massage therapy offers numerous benefits to the entire body. It helps ease joint and muscle pain, and can even reduce the increased levels of stress that tend to come with aging. The massage techniques utilized for seniors include lighter, gentle stroking and kneading as well as application of pressure to specific points on the body. Even a light, gentle massage has proven effects on the nervous system and blood circulation, two of the most vulnerable systems of the body that feel the effects of aging.

A typical massage for a senior usually involves a short session lasting around thirty minutes. Soothing hand motions help improve blood



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circulation, especially in diabetic feet, and relieve muscle tension while relaxing the body and mind.

Senior Massage Benefits

Massage therapy for seniors has been proven to have positive effects on:

- **Pain due to osteoarthritis.** A study showed that seniors who utilized massage as part of their treatment for osteoarthritis had less pain and stiffness and improved physical function over the course of a few months.
- **Sleep habits and quality of sleep.** Seniors who receive weekly massages report that they are sleeping more deeply and for longer lengths of time. This results in an overall feeling of better health as the body is being allowed more time to repair itself.
- **Agitation due to Alzheimer's disease.** Studies have shown that slow-stroke back massage on Alzheimer's patients helps to alleviate agitation. This is expressed through behaviors like wandering, pacing and resisting.
- **Alleviating depression.** Touch has been proven to provide comfort to the elderly- especially since so many of them are deprived of it- which can help improve mental health.
- **Physical and mental relaxation.** Massage has been shown to decrease the unhealthy buildup of cortisol, known as the "stress hormone," in the body, allowing the body to enter a rest and rejuvenation period.
- **Quicker healing from injuries or illnesses.** As we age, our joints and muscles tend to tighten, which can make it more difficult to heal from



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an injury because our range of motion is restricted. Massage therapy keeps muscles, connective tissues, joints, tendons and ligaments more fluid and even less injury-prone in the long run.

SOURCE: <http://www.ascseniorcare.com/therapeutic-benefits-massage-seniors/>