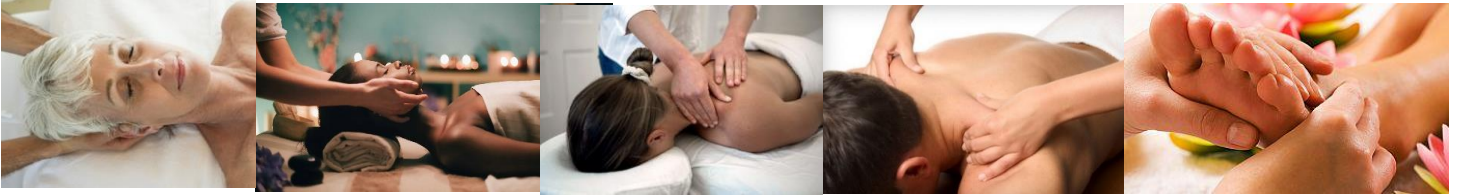




## Invest in Your Health



### Massage, Now More than Ever

Consumers may be tempted to trim their wellness budgets when economic times are tough. Yet a recent national consumer survey showed most massage-minded Americans are committed to maintaining the health benefits they experience with massage. It makes sense – the better you feel, the better job you can do of caring for yourself and your loved ones.

Massage should play a role in reducing stress and strengthening the health of Americans. When people feel like their best, they are more likely to be able to face the challenges difficult times present. With greater health and peace of mind, consumers can face difficulties with poise, clarity of purpose, and strengthened emotional reserves.

Truly, massage is more than a luxury – it's a vital part of self-care that has a positive ripple effect on us as we work, play, and care for others.

### Invest in yourself and those you love

If you think about it, massage is an excellent value. The price of massage has remained stable in recent years, as the cost of movies, dining out, and sports events has risen. Which of these has the power to improve your health and your outlook on life?

In economically challenging times, it is vital to invest in preventative healthcare. The last thing you want is to get sick, have to take time off work, and pay expensive medical bills.

Following are health reasons all American adults should be including massage in their family budgets and schedules. Massage therapy:

- Boosts the immune system
- Reduces anxiety
- Reduces the flow of stress hormones
- Improves sleep
- Improves energy levels and reduces fatigue
- Improves concentration
- Improves self-esteem
- Reduces frequency of headaches
- Releases endorphins.





## Positive Effects

The positive effects of regular massage can have benefits in many areas of your life.

**Home.** Massage therapy helps families under stress create healthy households with clear-thinking and more relaxed moms and dads. Individuals taking care of themselves are better equipped to be responsive caregivers who can provide a sense of security – to children, partners, aging parents, or other family members.



**Work.** The health benefits of massage can help forestall illnesses and lost work time, especially when you may be asked to produce more with fewer resources. Decision-making skills will be better and your performance is likely to be improved with a clear focus and more energy. A hint for the boss: Research shows employees exhibit improved performance and less stress when given twice weekly, 15-minute massages in the office.

**Health.** Those with existing health conditions can continue to reap benefits in the following ways. Proactively caring for health through massage may help reduce costly doctor visits and use of prescription and over-the-counter medications.

## Research Shows

- Massage can reduce **sports-related soreness** and **improve circulation** – good to know when you may be exercising more to reduce stress.
- Deep-Tissue massage is effective in **treating back pain**.
- Fibromyalgia patients receiving massage have **less pain, depression, anxiety, stiffness, fatigue, and problematic sleep**.
- Massage reduces symptoms of **carpal tunnel syndrome**.
- **Oncology** patients show less pain, fatigue, nausea, anxiety, and depression following massage therapy.
- **Stroke patients** show less anxiety and lower blood pressure with massage therapy.
- Massage therapy is effective in reducing **postsurgical pain**.
- Alzheimer's patients exhibit **reduced pacing, irritability, and restlessness** after neck and shoulder massage.



- Massage **during labor** appears to reduce stress and anxiety, relax muscles, and help block pain. Massage may also reduce tearing, shorten labor, reduce the need for medication, and shorten hospital stays.
- **Preterm babies** receiving massage therapy gain more weight and have shorter hospital stays than infants not receiving massage.
- Massage is beneficial in reducing symptoms associated with **arthritis, asthma, burns, high blood pressure, and premenstrual syndrome**.