

McIntyre Massage Wellness Newscast

November 2010 Member, Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals

Check Out Chair Massage

You Deserve a Break in Your Busy Day

Cathy Ulrich

Ever been curious about the chair massage area at the mall? Or wondered why your company offers massages in the conference room on certain days? Does it seem strange people want to get massages in an odd-looking chair during a busy workday? Well, maybe they're on to something. In fact, a small investment in a chair massage session can lead to a significant pay-off.

Chair massage--also called seated or on-site massage--provides a host of benefits, including reducing stress, improving mental clarity, and enhancing work performance. And the time investment is minimal: short five-, ten- or fifteen-minute sessions can often do the trick.

During the Work Day

In short, this study shows what chair massage enthusiasts have known for some time: even a short massage can help relax tight muscles and remind the body to breathe. Although full-body massages are optimal, taking time out for one in the middle of the workday can lull you to sleep, and it can be difficult to schedule it into your day. On the other hand, a chair massage during an afternoon break may be a better alternative, particularly when you need to be energized, so you can better focus for late-day meetings or evening responsibilities. Besides, the short massage session time--often the same as your coffee break--keeps you from

*Wishing you a
safe and
healthy holiday
season!*

-MMB Staff



Productivity increase and stress reduction are both benefits of chair massage in the office.

In a study done at the Touch Research Institute at the University of Miami, researchers found that when participants got a fifteen-minute chair massage just twice a week, their anxiety levels were lower, their brain waves proved they were more relaxed and alert, and their stress levels were measurably reduced. The study also showed improved speed and accuracy on math computations.

stressing about being away from work too long.

You don't have to undress, you don't need the privacy of a table massage, and you're ready to get back to work feeling refreshed.

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Office Hours and Contact

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Chair massage can also be a great introduction into the world of bodywork. If you've always wondered why some people are adamant about getting massages, or if you've been trying to explain to a friend or coworker why bodywork is so wonderful, chair massage is an excellent way to get a sampling.

The Massage Chair

The key to comfort for on-site massages is the specially tailored chair. It's important you feel fully supported and at ease so you can relax for your session. With pads to support your face, chest, arms, pelvis, and knees, a massage chair is surprisingly comfortable. And the chair's design puts you in a position that relieves tension even before the therapist starts working.

Massage chairs are fully adjustable so your practitioner can tailor the chair specifically to your body with just the release of a few levers. The unique design allows your therapist to easily access areas on your body--such as the neck, shoulders, and back--that may be the tightest.

Is It Effective?

You may wonder how a massage can be effective when the practitioner works through your clothes and without oils.

Chair massage has its roots in a centuries-old Japanese massage technique called amma. A predecessor to the better-known shiatsu, amma is done while seated, and therapists are trained to work specifically on the body's pressure points. Pressure point work, especially on the areas made accessible by the position of the massage chair, can free muscles and relieve stress and tight tissues without working directly on the skin. Therapists are skilled at palpating and working through clothes. In minutes, you feel relaxed, alert, and comfortable as your tension melts away. And, since no oils or lotions are used for chair massage, you can go right back to your day without feeling like you need to shower.

Your Trouble Spots

Once you decide how long you want your chair massage session to last, your therapist will adjust the routine for maximum effectiveness. These sessions can be very beneficial in treating

work-related issues, such as repetitive stress conditions and muscle tightness caused from sitting in front of a computer.

Be sure to tell your massage therapist of specific concerns you have, such as carpal tunnel syndrome or shoulder or neck stiffness. Your practitioner may suggest a longer session for your next visit to fully address your needs.

What's the Cost?

Chair massage is an economical bodywork option because the sessions are relatively short.

Typically, a therapist charges about a dollar a minute. While tipping is common practice, practitioners do not automatically expect it. Chair massage enthusiasts will tell you \$15 is an excellent investment in your health--and it feels great.

Talk To Your Employer

More and more companies are offering chair massages for their employees. Increased productivity and employee appreciation are just a couple of the benefits acknowledged by management. Some companies pay for the services, while others provide space for chair massage and employees pick up their own tabs.

If your company doesn't already offer chair massage, ask your human resources director if it's possible to bring this service into the office. Whether your employer pays for it or you do, you win, because you're able to make it through a stressful week a little more relaxed.

If you encounter a chair massage opportunity at work, at a local fair, or grocery store, do yourself a favor and sign up. You'll be happy you did.



The specially designed massage chair allows practitioners to access chronically tense areas.

No Pain, No Gain?

Bodywork Doesn't Have to Hurt to be Effective

Cathy Ulrich

Some people believe massage must be painful to be effective. While some modalities may be intense, this doesn't necessarily translate to a knuckle-biting experience. In fact, painful bodywork can be counterproductive. If you can't breathe comfortably, want to tighten up, make a face, or curl your toes, the technique is too much for you. Your body will go into a protective mode and actually block any positive change.

"No pain, no gain" just doesn't have to apply when it comes to bodywork. Be sure to provide feedback to your practitioner so that you're on the same page. Think of it as a "scale of intensity." On my scale, zero is not touching you and ten is pain--not the worst pain you've ever felt but the place where you want to hold your breath, tighten up, make a face, leave your body. That's a ten.

You shouldn't ever have to be in a pain range to get results, and be sure to let your practitioner know if you're in an eight or nine range. They may stay at

that level if that's where the therapeutic value will be attained, but again, only if it's manageable and you're not tightening up.

And every single client is different. Not only do individuals all start in different places, but their bodies respond differently, and their pain thresholds are extremely varied. What one person finds heavenly, another calls torture.

If it does feel too painful, be sure to tell your therapist. Usually, a practitioner can simply slow down to ease the intensity without losing therapeutic value. Sometimes, if you are nervous or stressed, just remembering to breathe will make your body more open, and you'll remain comfortable.

Bodywork needn't be a test of how tough you are. By giving your therapist appropriate feedback and understanding that painful techniques aren't really helping your body heal, you'll have a great experience in the session and feel better afterward.



Therapeutic massage actually feels good.

Easing Holiday Angst

Five Stress Busters for a Joyous Season

You enter the holiday season with the best of intentions -- looking forward to time spent with family and friends, decorating, shopping, baking. But as soon as you pile holiday activities on top of an already busy life, you're likely to find yourself relating more to Ebenezer Scrooge than Martha Stewart.

Consider these five suggestions to keep holiday stress at bay:

1. Determine a Shopping Budget

For many, gift giving is an important part of the holidays, serving as a way to express love and appreciation for friends and family. But when the credit card bills arrive in January, you may discover you've extended your holiday stress well into the New Year. Plan your budget in

advance, determine what you can spend, and stick to the plan.

2. Create a Time Budget

Many will make a shopping budget, but what about making a time budget? Before accepting every invitation this year, decide ahead how many parties you can and want to attend while maintaining your sanity. Make choices about your time commitments based on what you'd really like to do this year, rather than what you think you should do or what you've always done. Don't forget to leave time for yourself.

3. Set Food-Intake Boundaries

You'll likely be tempted to eat in excess, and don't be too hard on yourself if you don't stick to your pre-holiday eating

standards. But do decide ahead of time just how much you'll deviate from your eating routine.

4. Stick to Your Exercise Regimen

Regular exercise is a powerful stress buster. You'll feel better, sleep better, avoid weight gain, boost your immune system, and maintain a positive outlook about yourself. While it may seem like an easy time concession to make, don't give in to the idea. Stick to exercise, and you'll thank yourself for it.

5. Take Time to Rest

Take time from your schedule to honor the cycles of the season. The holidays fall during winter solstice -- the shortest day of the year. Learn from nature, and get plenty of rest.

Live in such a way that you would not be ashamed to sell your parrot to the town gossip.

-Will Rogers

Happy Holiday's Roxboro! We are thrilled to announce that even in these tough economic times people are willing to show continued support for new businesses and new ideas to benefit the health of our community.

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