



# The Center for Integrative Medicine

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# Massage Therapy

## What is Massage Therapy?

Massage is currently the most widely used muscular therapy. There are about 100,000 practitioners in the U.S. The term “therapeutic massage” refers to a range of therapies using touch to encourage relaxation while also promoting physical and psychological health. The massage therapists at The Center for Integrative Medicine use different techniques to improve both the structure and function of your body, thereby improving your overall health. These techniques vary depending on your needs and may involve soft tissue manipulation, pressure, gliding, and kneading. Our therapists specialize in the following techniques: Swedish, deep-tissue, orthopedic and sports massage, myofascial manipulation, acupressure, integrative, manual lymph drainage, and pre/post natal massage.

## What are Some of the Benefits of Massage?

Research is proving the efficacy of massage. Abdominal surgery patients recovered more quickly with massage. Premature infants gained more weight and fared better if they were massaged. Office workers were more alert and performed better when they received regular massage. Autistic children showed less erratic behavior after massage therapy. Research also suggests that massage may induce relaxation, enhance one’s sense of well being, decrease pain, relieve low back pain, and ease post-mastectomy lymphedema.

**As an adjunct to medical treatment, massage may help combat the pain and symptoms of a wide variety of ailments and medical conditions, including:**

- Arthritis
- Asthma and bronchitis
- Carpal tunnel syndrome
- Circulatory problems
- Digestive disorders
- Depression
- Headache
- Insomnia
- Myofascial pain
- Sinusitis
- Sports Injuries
- TMJ

## What Does Receiving Massage Therapy Involve?

- ☿ **Before Your Massage.** Prior to receiving your first massage, you will be asked to complete a short questionnaire regarding your health and medical history. Let your therapist know about any area where you need extra attention, and/or any area that you want left alone. This will help to tailor the massage to your specific needs. Your massage therapist will answer any questions you have about massage.
- ☿ **During Your Massage.** Your massage will take place in a warm, comfortable room with soft music or silence. The therapist will leave the room while you undress and then relax on the table. Please disrobe only to the point you feel comfortable. You will always be covered with a sheet or blanket. Your body is only undraped to work on the area involved at the time. A light skin-nourishing lotion, cream, or oil will be used to reduce friction to the skin. Many people close their eyes and relax and some even drift in and out of sleep. Others prefer to talk and that’s also perfectly acceptable. When the session has concluded, your massage therapist will once again leave the room to allow you time to enjoy the moment of relaxation and to redress.
- ☿ **After Your Massage.** Most people experience a deep sense of relaxation and calm after a massage. Many experience freedom from aches and pains. After the initial period of feeling very relaxed most clients experience an increase in energy and/or unwinding effect that can last for several days. Sometimes the pain is decreased after the massage but can even decrease more the next day. From having the muscles and tissues worked on, you may experience mild muscle aches the next day.





## Are There Any Special Considerations I Should be Aware of?

- **Drink plenty of WATER before and after your session.** During a massage metabolic waste, or toxins are released. Increasing your water intake will assist your body in removing those toxins.
- It is important to consult with your physician or health care professional before beginning massage therapy. This allows the physician or nurse and all practitioners to work together to help you in the healing process.
- Massage does **not** replace your pain medicine. It works along with your pain medication to increase symptom relief. Therefore, it is helpful to inform your massage therapist of any medications, herbs or vitamins you are currently taking.

### Notify your therapist immediately if you:

- ◆ Have lymph and/or bone disease and/or low blood counts
- ◆ Are undergoing radiation treatment
- ◆ Have sensitive skin or are allergic to certain lotions, etc.
- ◆ Are pregnant or nursing
- ◆ Are experiencing any discomfort, or if you would like more or less pressure during your massage. This will allow your therapist to make changes that will be more appropriate for you.

## How Much Does Massage Therapy Cost?

Most massages last from 45-90 minutes with the average duration being 60 minutes. The cost of a massage ranges from \$40-\$100.00 per session.

## How Do I Schedule an Appointment?

To make an appointment, please call the Wellness Concierge at The Center for Integrative Medicine, University of Colorado Hospital, 720-848-1090, Monday – Friday, 8:00a.m. – 5:00p.m.

*By making this information available, neither the University of Colorado Hospital nor The Center for Integrative Medicine makes any recommendations, promises, or guarantees the effectiveness of this integrative therapy. For any serious conditions, we recommend that you contact your physician before trying any new therapy.*

