

Massage Therapy

Massage is an excellent natural conservative treatment option and is a great way for patients to reduce stiffness and musculoskeletal pain. At Arctic Chiropractic Juneau, we offer specific massage and muscular therapy that is designed to work with the patient's current injury. The benefits of massage include: a reduction in swelling, relief of muscle pain and muscle spasms, relaxing muscles, increased blood flow and circulation, and an increase in the body's range of motion.

How Does Massage Therapy Work?

The massage therapist is trained to apply long, smooth, kneading strokes and a variety of other movements and strokes that are based on manipulating the superficial layers of muscle. The therapist will use aids like lotion or massage oils to help reduce friction when rubbing the muscles and to encourage relaxation while they work to release the knots in the muscle tissue.

Massage therapy works by improving the circulation which helps to relieve pain and lessen muscle tension. The improved circulation helps to bring the cells of the body more oxygen and more nutrition. Massage therapy also helps with improving the patient's flexibility and mobility, while helping to clear waste such as lactic acid, which causes pain and stiffness in muscles and joints.

Why Get Massage Therapy?

Massage therapy is popular for a wide variety of health concerns and simply for relaxation purposes. Some conditions which massage can be beneficial include: back pain, stress-relief, stress-related conditions, headaches, migraines, circulatory issues, respiratory issues, repetitive strain related injuries like carpal tunnel, inflammatory conditions, tendinitis, and arthritis. Massage can also be quite helpful for post-surgical and post-injury healing.

A great massage can leave you feeling quite relaxed and quite invigorated at the same time. Massage is excellent for relieving stress. It has also been linked to lowering levels of cortisol which helps the body to lower its stress response. Massage therapy can also assist the immune function as well.

What to Expect in a Typical Massage?

Typically, each massage session will last about 30 minutes to 90 minutes, though massage therapists may offer customized sessions. The massage session will often begin with a review of your symptoms and a consultation that discusses your medical history, lifestyle, and current symptoms. Many offices will have paperwork for you to fill out, such as a disclaimer, prior to starting. Some will include a visual representation in the form of a diagram that patients can place an "x" on the locations of the body that you are sore, in discomfort, or feeling pain.

You will be asked to undress once you are in the therapy room, although, many patients prefer to keep their underwear on. The therapist will wait outside the room until you are ready to continue. You will be asked to lie face down on the padded massage table and asked to cover yourself with a blanket or sheet.

The massage therapist will knock on your door after a few minutes and to make sure you are ready. When they re-enter the room, they will adjust the face rest and the pillows to make sure that you are comfortably positioned. It is important to mention whether you are too cold or warm and the massage therapist will respond accordingly.

Prior to starting the massage, the massage therapist will generally use a light oil or lotion on their hands. A full body massage will often start on the back and shoulders and move down the body to the legs. After the backside has been massaged, you will be asked to turn over, where the massage will continue on your arms, legs, midsection, shoulders and neck.

You will be covered with the sheet at all times. According to North American regulations, the only part that is to be uncovered at any time is the part that is being treated. The massage therapist will once again exit the room after completing the massage so that you can get changed in privacy. Be sure to take your time getting up as some patients will experience dizziness or feel lightheaded if they sit or stand up too quickly.

Does Massage Therapy Hurt?

When the massage therapist begins working on tension areas and applies pressure over "knots", there may be some mild discomfort or aching around these areas. The massage should not hurt, so if you are feeling the pressure is too strong for you, be sure that you mention this to the therapist so that they can adjust their pressure accordingly.

After the Massage

After receiving a massage treatment, most people feel relaxed and calm. It is common for some patients to feel some mild aching and pains over the next day or two. The aching is quite similar to the experience of going skiing or going to the gym, depending on how deep the muscle massage was.

Precautions

Massage therapy is not recommended for certain individuals, including: people with rashes, skin disorders, infections, or open wounds; those who have just undergone surgery; those who are in treatment for chemotherapy or radiation; people who are prone to blood clots may not undergo therapy due to the potential risk of dislodging a blood clot; or people suffering from heart disease may need to check with their doctor prior to booking a massage. It is also recommended that pregnant women check first with their doctor and any massage should be performed by a therapist who is certified in pregnancy massage.

Massage should not be performed on areas that have unhealed wounds, recent fractures, bruising, tumors, or done over an abdominal hernia.

Massage Tips

Try to arrive to the clinic at least ten minutes early to fill out forms (if it's your first time). If you are a regular, try to arrive five or so minutes early to help gather a few minutes for rest and relaxation prior to massage. Try not to eat a large meal before getting a massage.