

# Massage and mental health

Studies show that massage therapy can have a profound affect on mood, with anxiety reduction being one of the most well established effects. Evidence for the effectiveness of massage in promoting mental health crosses multiple presenting conditions and populations.

## DEPRESSION

According to a 2010 meta-analysis published in the *Journal of Clinical Psychiatry*, massage is associated with alleviated symptoms in depressed people.

## TRAIT ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION

Reductions of trait anxiety and depression were identified as the largest effects of massage in a 2004 meta-analysis of massage therapy research. A course of treatment provided benefits similar in magnitude to those of psychotherapy, according to this study published in *Psychological Bulletin*.

## DEPRESSION IN CANCER PATIENTS

There is a vast body of evidence showing the positive effects of massage in cancer palliation. According to a study published in *Support Care Cancer*, massage therapy is an efficient treatment for reducing depression in breast cancer patients. A 2009 systematic review also suggested that massage can alleviate a wide range of symptoms including pain, nausea, anxiety, depression, anger, stress and fatigue.

## MENOPAUSE

A study of 87 women in *Complementary Therapies in Medicine* concluded that massage was effective in reducing the psychological symptoms of menopause.

## OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

A 2015 study of intensive care nurses showed that massage was an effective, non-invasive way to reduce stress, promote mental health and prevent the decrease in quality of work life.

## ANOREXIA AND BULIMIA

Massage, aerobic exercise and yoga may improve mental and physical quality of life in patients with an eating disorder, according to a 2014 systematic review of physical therapy interventions published in *Disability and Rehabilitation*.

## According to the 2007 National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing



**ONE IN FIVE (20% OR 3.2 MILLION)** had a mental health issue lasting 12 months.

There was also **4.1 MILLION PEOPLE** who had experienced a mental health issue at some point in their life but did not have symptoms in the 12 months prior to the survey interview.

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