

A MESSAGE FOR YOU

Massage has been shown to promote relaxation, emotional wellbeing and reduce difficulties related to physical functioning.

Massage

Massage is a manual therapy that dates back to before recorded time.(1) There are various massage techniques including sports massage, Swedish massage, aromatherapy massage, acupoint massage, acupressure massage, myofascial release, neuromuscular massage and self-massage to name a few.(1-7) Most of the evidence is based on massage being provided by a carer or therapist. Hand massage and slow back massage have been shown to promote relaxation in older people.(8) It has also been reported that older adults who received massage therapy experienced beneficial outcomes relating to general and emotional wellbeing, including improvement in anxiety and depression symptoms, and reduced difficulties relating to physical functioning and emotional issues including reduction in perceived stress.(4, 6) In residential care settings, older people who received regular massage found that the massage helped with pain, sleep, emotion and psychosocial health.(3) Massage has also been shown to enhance quality of life for older people needing additional care while enhancing involvement with family members.(3) Aromatherapy massage uses essential oils as part of the massage experience and has been shown to reduce symptoms of depression in older people.(7) The essential oils used in trials included lavender, sweet orange, and bergamot.(7) Acupoint massage, a specific technique, has been shown to help maintain cognitive function in older adults aged 60 years and older but there is little evidence available on the cognitive effects of other massage techniques.(2)

GOLDSTER★ **Points and Evidence Levels for this Activity**

Domain	Impact Strength	Points	Information on Evidence	Evidence Type	Evidence Level
Physical	Mild	1	In healthy older people, massage has been shown to have a mild beneficial impact on quality of life.(3)	Review	Low
			People aged 60 years and older who had used massage therapy in the last year reported having fewer limitations due to physical issues.(4)	Cohort study	Moderate
Cognitive	None	0	There is no clear evidence available on the benefits of a broad range of massage techniques on cognition.	None	None
Emotional	Mild	1	In people aged 60 years and older, massage therapy has shown mild benefit for reducing difficulties due to emotional issues and improving emotional wellbeing including reducing symptoms of anxiety, depression and stress.(4, 6)	Review, Cohort study	Moderate
			In people aged 65 and older, regular massage has shown to have a mild impact on pain, sleep, emotion and psychosocial health.(3)	Review	Low

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References

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