

# MASSAGE THERAPY & PAIN MANAGEMENT



“Evidence supports the inclusion of massage therapy for many important patient health treatments.”

Massage therapy’s role in integrative health care has become widely accepted in major hospitals and in daily medical practice. A wealth of research has also shown the impact of massage therapy for pain management and relief. To support these conversations, **American Massage Therapy Association (AMTA)** has published an educational tool: “Massage Therapy in Integrative Care & Pain Management” which explores new research demonstrating massage therapy’s value and efficacy.

## Conditions and Treatment Approaches for Massage Therapy

CHRONIC PAIN MANAGEMENT	BEHAVIORAL HEALTH TREATMENT	REHABILITATION/ PHYSICAL TRAINING	ACUTE MEDICAL TREATMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Back pain</li> <li>Neck and shoulder pain</li> <li>Headache</li> <li>Carpal tunnel syndrome</li> <li>Osteoarthritis</li> <li>Fibromyalgia</li> <li>Hospice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anxiety and stress</li> <li>Depression</li> <li>PTSD</li> <li>Substance use disorder recovery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performance training/injury treatment</li> <li>Ergonomics and job-related injuries</li> <li>Cardiac rehab</li> <li>Joint replacement surgery</li> <li>Scar management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cancer management</li> <li>Post-operative pain</li> <li>Lifestyle diseases</li> <li>Maternity and newborn care</li> </ul>

There is significant evidence supporting the inclusion of massage therapy for many important patient health treatments, including those for chronic pain management, behavioral health treatment, rehabilitation/physical training and acute medical conditions. Incorporating massage therapy into approaches to pain management, and as an integrated complement to some pharmacological approaches, can help many suffering both chronic and acute pain.

## Health Care Professionals Who Recommend Massage



**50 million**

According to a recent consumer survey, approximately **50 million American adults** (17 percent) discussed massage therapy with their doctors or health care providers in the previous year.<sup>1</sup>

# Massage therapy is an effective and cost-efficient pain management approach

Encouraging medical practitioners to prescribe massage therapy in cases where it would be an effective pain management tool and insurance companies to cover massage therapy can help decrease the costs of opioid addiction.

As stated in a recent letter from the National Association of Attorney's General to the America's Health Insurers Plans (AHIP), **massage therapy is not the only solution to this problem, but it is an important part of a comprehensive national approach to reducing addiction and its attendant costs.**

The onset of the opioid epidemic has not only increased the costs of treating addiction, it has also impacted the overall health of the nation.

**MASSAGE THERAPY IS  
RECOGNIZED BY:**

**NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH**

**THE JOINT COMMISSION**

**AMERICAN COLLEGE OF  
PHYSICIANS (ACP)**

**FEDERATION OF STATE  
MEDICAL BOARDS**

**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**

**VETERANS HEALTH  
ADMINISTRATION**

## Benefits of Substituting Massage for Opioids in the United States

Estimates based on a massage therapy cost of \$80

Using Massage Therapy When Effective			Opioid Prescription Only	
	Patients	Medium Cost - \$80	Patients	Costs
Massage Therapy	5,015,499 <sup>2</sup>	\$4,814,879,290	-	\$0
Opioid Medication	22,110,187	\$552,754,664	27,125,686	\$678,142,146
Opioid Addiction	462,502	\$122,684,830,584	573,639	\$152,165,416,736
<b>Total</b>	27,125,686	\$128,052,464,538	27,125,686	\$152,843,558,882
<b>Savings</b>		<b>\$24,791,094,344</b>		

## Benefits of Substituting Massage for Opioids for Idaho

	Patients	Medium Cost - \$80
Massage Therapy	25,769	\$120,940,720

## Estimated Patients Who Can be Treated with Massage Therapy and Opioid Prescriptions

	Using Massage Therapy When Effective	Opioid Prescription Only	Difference
<b>Massage Patients</b>	<b>5,015,499</b>	-	<b>5,015,499</b>
<b>Opioid Patients</b>	<b>22,110,187</b>	<b>27,125,686</b>	<b>-5,015,499</b>
Addicts Within Patient Pool	462,502	573,639	-111,137
<b>Total</b>	27,125,686	27,125,686	

**111,137 people**

Simply using massage therapy instead of opioid medication for client conditions where massage is proven effective can **reduce overall addiction rates in the United States by about 111,137 people**. In this sense, the benefits of massage therapy are twofold: reducing the number of people who potentially struggle with opioid addiction and **reducing the impact on the American economy by \$23 to \$25.99 billion annually**, based on the cost of massage.

**\$25.99 billion**

<sup>1</sup> American Massage Therapy Association 2017 Consumer Survey, conducted by ORC International

<sup>2</sup> Patient numbers were rounded from 5,015,499.2603