

Massage Frequency

Evidence is showing that the more massage you can allow yourself, the better you'll feel. Many people enjoy massage because it is relaxing and pleasant, but it also has health benefits.

A frequent question clients ask is *"how often should I get a massage?"* In general, experts say "regular" is preferable, but how regular depends on your situation. While daily massage would be delightful, practical considerations such as cost, time, and physical need likely determine the frequency of treatments.

Receiving massage at least once a month will result in cumulative health benefits for clients, but an even greater frequency will be much more effective. At a minimum, receiving massage once a month is a good start. However, once every two weeks is better. In the cases of clients who have had recent physical trauma, receiving massage once a week or more may be indicated.

As a general rule, try to use the same therapist for your massages, since he or she will get to know your body. Be aware that receiving massage has cumulative benefits, so you will not instantly feel better after one or two sessions, but you will start to notice a difference after four or more.

To be able to understand massage frequency one should consider the following factors:

1. Why are you coming for treatment? For example, is this for a specific issue, or is it for relaxation?

As already mentioned, treatments which focus on specific issues are usually more frequent. For an acute injury more frequent treatments of shorter duration should help relieve pain and congestion in the area, then after a few weeks, switch to deeper, muscular work for longer periods of time.

2. What is the tissue presentation?

If you have a chronic, long-standing issue, and the tissue is very "dense" or "hard", then you may need several treatments over a few weeks to make progress. Tissue that is inflamed from injury cannot be treated directly with massage therapy, however, can be treated with Manual Lymph Drainage. Frequent treatments of this nature are recommended as this therapy facilitates the removal of metabolic waste from the injury and relieves pain and congestion.

Keeping in mind that everyone is individual and responds differently to treatment, you may notice that the effects of the treatment last only a day or so after the first treatment, with



longer periods of feeling better as you progress - this is when your therapist should reduce treatment frequency.

3. After 3 treatments, how are you feeling?

Personally, even with chronic issues such as upper back pain and tension, generally a client should notice an improvement by the end of the 3rd treatment. This does not mean that there is a huge or remarkable improvement, but some progress should have been made.

The incredible benefits of massage are doubly powerful if taken in regular "doses." It's undoubtedly a wonderful thing when your therapist begins unwinding those stress-tightened muscles, and your day's troubles begin to fade away. Thus in our next issue we shall see how one can make most of a massage.