

MASSAGE THERAPY ~ MORE THAN A TREND

By Amelia Burgess – Licensed Massage Therapist

“The mind, which before massage is in a perturbed, restless, vacillating, and even despondent state becomes after massage, calm, quiet, peaceful and subdued. In fact, the wearied and worried mind, has been converted into a mind restful, placid and refreshed”

Dr. S. Dowse, eminent Victorian physician 1887.

The ancient practice of massage is the oldest form of physical medicine, and can be traced back to Chinese manuscripts dated 400 BC. Hippocrates, the father of medicine, was an advocate of massage and evidence of remedial massage practices can be found in ancient Roman and Egyptian cultures. Massage decreased in popularity during the medieval times but reemerged as a practice of mainstream medicine in the late 18th and 19th centuries. Although currently, massage is considered to be a type of complimentary alternative medicine, massage has indeed found its way back into our contemporary mainstream healthcare because it has proven to be a powerful and valid form of body therapy. Massage is recognized to be one of the fastest growing forces in the field of healthcare. Health and wellness seekers worldwide have recognized the importance of receiving regular massage. Research continues to be conducted in a variety of arenas which validate the advocacy of massage therapy and its ability to effectuate good outcomes.

According to the Canadian Medical Association Journal (CMAJ), “adults with sub acute low back pain reported improved function, less intense pain, and a decrease in the quality of pain and anxiety after 6 sessions of massage therapy and remedial exercise”. The CMAJ also reported that “massage therapy based on physiology and soft tissue manipulation found to be effective in the non pharmacological manage of sub acute low back pain”. Another study conducted by the University of Florida demonstrated that adults with high blood pressure who received massage 2 times per week regularly demonstrated a decrease in blood pressure, a decrease in stress related hormones, and decreases in depression, anxiety and hostility.

condition of the tissues and the source of pain if any. Massage affects the bodies systems in 2 basic ways. First, a mechanical action involving the movement of muscles and soft tissues through the use of pressure, stretching and holding techniques. This results in cleansing the tissues of acids and deposits as well as breaking up fibrous tissues and loosening stiff joints. Secondly, a reflex action is involved whereby one area of treatment can affect another area. The body is highly interconnected not just by flesh and bone, but by nerve pathways. An example of this would be acupressure and reflexology treatment which involves holding of specific points to access certain organ systems. The objective of the massage therapist is to assist the patient through various stages of healing such as relief, correction and maintenance.

Individuals seeking massage include those afflicted with chronic or acute pain, sports injuries, orthopedic conditions, pre and post partum women or those individuals experiencing levels of stress that compel them to experience the luxury of full relaxation.

Typically a session will last for one hour, although more or less can be arranged. Treatment may include a blend of techniques to meet your individual needs. Deep tissue or light effleurage and the use of heated stones are examples of treatment techniques. Clients will be asked to disrobe only to their comfort level and are draped appropriately at all times. Massage takes place on either a comfortable table or a massage chair (for those who are not comfortable on a table) in a private room

Currently these services are available at Huggins Back Bay Rehabilitation through Amelia Morency, licensed massage therapist. Amelia's personal and professional goal is to provide the highest quality of massage as a standard healthcare service in a professional setting to the wellness seeker. This will help to foster healing and recovery from injury and disease, as well as assist in the management of pain. Amelia is currently specializing in rehabilitative massage, which is often combined with physical therapy treatments. This is especially helpful to individuals requiring PT because massage and PT help augment each other. Amelia is also a member of the women's health team at Huggins Back Bay Rehabilitation which is specializing in pre- and post-natal care (massage, pain management, aquatic therapy), as well as pelvic floor dysfunction and other women's health issues. Appointments for massage are available *to all* at Back Bay Rehabilitation and one does not need a prescription from their doctor to come in for massage. We invite you to make an appointment, come in to see our new facility and experience massage therapy for yourself. Appointments can be made by calling 569-7565.