

# Massage Therapy

## fast Facts



### The Business of Massage

- ABMP estimates 278,000 trained therapists provide massage and bodywork in the United States.<sup>i</sup>
- Consumers receive approximately 230 million massage sessions annually, making massage therapy an \$11 billion to \$15 billion industry.<sup>ii</sup>
- Sixteen percent of U.S. adults visited a massage therapist in 2006, and 38 percent have received a professional massage sometime in their life.<sup>iii</sup>
- Consumers in 2006 had an overwhelmingly positive response to a massage, with 85 percent reporting very favorable feelings about their most recent experience.<sup>iv</sup>
- The median price for a one-hour massage is \$60 (ABMP 2005 Member Survey, correlated by the same finding in the Harstad Strategic Research 2007 Consumer Survey).
- A slightly higher proportion of American adults received at least one massage therapy session in 2006 than accessed chiropractic or physical therapy services. Most physical therapy services and many chiropractic treatments are reimbursed by health insurance, while more than 90 percent of massage therapy sessions are paid out of the client's pocket.<sup>v</sup>
- Consumers in the West and Midwest are most likely to have received a massage in 2006—20 percent and 19 percent respectively in a recent survey, compared with 14 percent in the Northeast and 12 percent in the South. Each of these percentages is up from 2004 levels, with the six percentage point gain in the Midwest the most dramatic. Massage use is higher in metropolitan areas.<sup>vi</sup>
- The number of state-approved schools has increased from 637 to 1,529 between 1998 and 2007. (ABMP surveys of state-approved massage schools, 1998 to 2007).
- The Society for Human Resource Management reported in 2007 that 13 percent of its 210,000 member companies offer workplace massage. An earlier *Working Mother* article found 77 percent of the top 100 U.S. companies offered massage at work.
- There are as many as 250 known types of massage and bodywork, with new massage modalities emerging every year.<sup>vii</sup>
- In the 42 states with licensing (including D.C.), uniform rules apply throughout each particular state, though the detailed requirements vary. Local requirements in the current nine non-licensed states vary considerably.<sup>viii</sup>

### Consumer Perspectives

- Spas employ an estimated 232,700 people in the United States—[www.experienceispa.com](http://www.experienceispa.com).
- Massage therapy is the most requested service in spas (Day Spa Business Report 2002, confirmed by ISPA 2006 Spa-Goer Study).

### Choosing a Massage Therapist

Call ABMP at 800-458-2267 for a referral or visit [www.massagetherapy.com](http://www.massagetherapy.com) for:

- A 250-item glossary and searchable 800-story archive to learn about the types of massage that best suit your needs.
- Practitioners listed by massage type and location. As a condition of membership, ABMP practitioners agree to follow the ABMP code of ethics; their training and credentials are verified by ABMP.
- Complete information on what to expect during a massage session.
- A state-by-state listing of regulation and training requirements for massage therapy.

### Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals

25188 Genesee Trail Rd., Ste. 200  
Golden, CO 80401

Mailing address:  
PO Box 1869  
Evergreen, CO 80437

800-458-2267  
[www.massagetherapy.com](http://www.massagetherapy.com)



- Fifteen percent of U.S. adults reported visiting a spa in 2006 (ISPA 2006 Spa-Goer Study).
- Revenues for the U.S. spa industry in 2005 were \$9.7 billion, up from \$7 billion in 2003. This represents an average annual growth of 18 percent—www.experienceispa.com.
- Women make up the majority of spa consumers (69 percent), according to the ISPA 2006 Spa-goer Study.

## Benefits of Massage

- Massage therapy is a safe and effective way to reduce pain and improve function in adults with **osteoarthritis of the knee**, reports a 2006 study in the *Archives of Internal Medicine*.
- The *Annals of Internal Medicine* reported in 2003 that massage therapy was **effective for treating persistent back pain**, as did a 2000 report by the *Canadian Medical Association Journal*.
- Research has shown massage reduces **carpal tunnel syndrome** symptoms. *The Journal of Bodywork and Movement Therapies*, 2004.
- Premature infant massage in the NICU was reported in *Neonatal Network* to be effective in **increasing weight gain**, improving **developmental scores**, **shortening hospital stays** and improving parent-baby bonding (2003).
- Pediatric healthcare staff report **increasing hospital use of complementary and alternative medicine**, including massage and energy work (*Advance for Nurses*, April 2007.)
- Touch Therapy Institute at the

University of Miami reports its massage therapy studies indicate effectiveness in:

- \* **Reducing mothers' risk** for premature delivery and post-partum depression; improved sleep for babies.
  - \* **Reduced pain** from migraines and arthritis.
  - \* **Reduced aggression** in adolescents and **less hyperactivity** in adolescents with ADHD.
  - \* **Greater alertness** in autistic children.
  - \* **Better lung function** in asthmatic children.
  - \* **Decreased glucose levels** in diabetic children.
  - \* **Less stress and improved performance** for employees receiving work-site massage.
- Massage therapy has been shown to strengthen the **immune system**, according to research published in the *Journal of Neuroscience*, 1996, and *Psychosomatic Medicine*, 2000.
  - In 2005, *Cancer Control* reported massage therapy effectively **reduced stress and anxiety in cancer patients**, with a promising outlook for pain control and management of other symptoms.
  - **Oncology** patients show less pain, fatigue, nausea, anxiety and depression following massage therapy, according to a study by Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, 2004, and a report in the *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, 2002.
  - Women with lymph node dissection receiving arm massage had **less pain** and surgery-related discomfort, according to a 2004 *Cancer Nursing* article.

## About ABMP

Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals is the largest national professional membership association serving the massage therapy profession.

Founded in 1987 and headquartered in Golden, Colo. ABMP is employee-owned and has 65,000 members.

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Consumers can locate qualified practitioners nationwide at [www.massagetherapy.com](http://www.massagetherapy.com).

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> January 2008 analysis was based on state licensing lists, totals from primary membership organizations [ABMP and AMTA], and state populations. General receptivity toward massage in particular regions was also factored in.

<sup>2</sup> A calculation using the 2005 average ABMP member-client contact hours per week (15.4), at an average rate of \$60 per hour yields an annual 182 million sessions and \$9.3 billion. A national consumer telephone survey of a representative sample of 1,008 adults aged 21 and older, conducted Jan 4-11, 2007 by independent, national public opinion research firm Harstad Strategic Research, Inc., Boulder, Colo., revealed approximately 230 million massage sessions were provided to American adults in 2006 at an average cost of \$60 per session. These findings yield a \$13.8 billion estimate. Under neither of these calculations, do massage therapists receive all these dollars; a portion accrues to spa owners, landlords, and medical professionals providing space and referrals. With additional payments for training, equipment, services and marketing, massage is an \$11 billion to \$15 billion industry.

<sup>3</sup> Harstad Strategic Research 2007 National Consumer Survey.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>6</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>7</sup> Massage, bodywork and somatic therapies are often complex mixtures of holistic healing practices involving physical, emotional and spiritual components. The definitions in the *Massagetherapy.com* glossary ([www.massagetherapy.com/glossary](http://www.massagetherapy.com/glossary)) have been compiled from a wide variety of sources over two decades. Some were supplied by developers of techniques, others by associations and educational institutions. Still others are a blend of data gleaned from several sources.

<sup>8</sup> Compiled from state websites, not including the District of Columbia and U.S. Territories. For more information, visit [www.massagetherapy.com/media](http://www.massagetherapy.com/media) and click on "Public Policy and Licensing."

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