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Massage Therapy for Back Pain



If you experience lower back pain, you are not alone. In the United States, lower back pain is the leading cause of absenteeism and general disability. Because this condition is often an ongoing problem and is difficult to pinpoint and treat, you may have wondered whether massage therapy would bring relief.

Massage therapy is not appropriate for every patient, so check with your doctor before you begin. If you get the go-ahead, here are some

things to consider. At its best, correctly administered massage therapy

- improves circulation
- relaxes muscles
- releases endorphins, chemicals that increase a sense of well being
- provides short-term, transient improvement in pain

However, massage therapy has some limitations. Pain relief is modest and short lived; function and range of motion are not permanently increased; and the underlying condition causing pain is not changed. In addition, massage therapy is not covered by most health insurance plans.

Exercise to strengthen the core muscles—every muscle between your shoulders and hips—can reduce pain and correct underlying postural defects and muscle imbalances causing pain. People who participate in supervised exercise programs show a greater reduction in pain and improvement in function than those who exercise without continuing guidance.

We can design a fully integrated exercise program to address your lower back pain, with the goal of increased flexibility, pain improvement and restoration of function. Should you wish to use massage therapy—in addition to exercise—for short-term relief, we can help you find a massage therapist whose approach will complement your exercise program.