



# Massage Benefits for Senior Citizens



## Massage Therapy and Elderly

According to the World Health Organization, by the year 2050 around 2 billion people will be aged 60 and over. By then Quebec will have one of the oldest populations in the Western world, with close to 30% aged 65 years and more. The challenge will be to live a longer, healthier life, especially for seniors who have chronic health conditions that impact on their quality of life.

When properly adapted and administered by FQM-certified therapists, geriatric massage has many benefits, both mental and physical. It helps improve general well-being and alleviate symptoms associated with pathologies such as hypertension, diabetes, arthritis, cancer or degenerative diseases like Alzheimer's or Parkinson's.

### CAUTIONS & PRECAUTIONS

- Please consult with your family doctor before having massage therapy;
- You absolutely must fill in a health questionnaire;
- Your FQM-certified massage therapist must be informed of any existing disease, including the medication prescribed for its treatment;
- If you prefer, you can remain clothed during massage sessions;
- If you feel any pain or discomfort while receiving a massage, tell your therapist.

## Benefits of Massage\*

- Facilitates relaxation
- Increases range of motion
- Alleviates pain due to arthritis
- Increases respiratory capacity
- Improves posture and mobility
- Strengthens muscles
- Reduces muscular tension
- Improves sleep quality
- Promotes natural joint lubrication

\* References: Harris M, Richards K. *The physiological and psychological effects of slow stroke back massage and hand massage on relaxation in older people.* J Clin Nurs 2010;19(7):917-926. Kilstoff K, Chenoweth L. *New approaches to health and well-being for dementia day-care clients, family carers and day-care staff.* International Journal of Nursing Practice 1998;4:70-83; Meeks, T.W., Wetherell, J.L., Irwin, M.R., Redwine, L.S., Jeste, D.V. (2007) Complementary and alternative treatments for late-life depression, anxiety, and sleep disturbance: a review of randomized-controlled trials. Journal of Clinical Psychiatry. Oct;68(10):1461-71; Snyder M, Egan EC, Burns KR. Interventions for decreasing agitation behaviors in persons with dementia. J Gerontol Nurs. 1995 Jul;21(7):34-40; Abdulla A, Bone M, Adams N. Evidence-based clinical practice guidelines on management of pain in older people. Age Ageing. 2013;42(2):151-153

In Québec, there are three major approaches:

- Biomechanical
- Psycho-Physical
- Energetic

Many massage techniques are offered, including:

**Swedish:** This highly popular biomechanical technique using oil rehabilitates tired, atonic or inhibited muscles.

**Californian:** This psycho-physical technique (also called Body & Mind) is the anti-stress massage par excellence as it provides long-lasting tension relief.

**Trager®:** The Trager Approach is based on the premise that muscular discomfort and pain are symptoms of accumulated tension—that can be released using gentle, rhythmic, natural movements.

Also available: Jin Shin Do®, Momentum, Amma Polarity, lymphatic drainage massage, etc.



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