



Massage + Cardiovascular Health

**Some Recent
Research:
Massage Therapy
Can Help Lower
Blood Pressure &
Control Stress**

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A study in the *International Journal of Preventive Medicine* concluded that massage therapy could serve as an effective intervention in controlling blood pressure in pre-hypertensive women.

Study methods: The study was a single-blind clinical trial where 50 pre-hypertensive women were randomly divided into a control and a test group. The test group received regular Swedish massage therapy, while the control group received no massage.

Protocol: The test group received a 10–15 minute Swedish massage three times a week for 10 sessions. The control group was instructed to simply relax for the same period of time while receiving no massage. Blood pressure was measured before and after each session, as well as 72 hours after finishing the massage therapy.

Results:

The researchers found that mean systolic and diastolic blood pressure in the massage group was significantly lower in comparison with the control group. The effects of massage lasted for up to 72 hours after treatment. Findings of the study indicated that massage therapy was a safe, effective, applicable and cost-effective intervention in helping control blood pressure.



The researchers found that regular Swedish massage therapy, as well as rest, significantly reduced blood pressure, heart rate and VCAM-1."

Massage + Hypertension

A separate study had similar findings, where those that received regular Swedish massage therapy had significantly lower blood pressure than those who did not have a massage.

Study Methods and Protocol: Women were randomly assigned to two groups: the massage group and the control group. The massage protocol was one hour of Swedish massage therapy once a week for four weeks. The massage therapists used a combination of petrissage or kneading, tapotement or beating/hacking/cupping, and effleurage or long strokes. These techniques were applied at medium pressure, and olive oil was used as a lubricant.

Results: The researchers found that regular Swedish massage therapy, as well as rest, significantly reduced blood pressure, heart rate and VCAM-1. However, the effect of rest on blood pressure did not last as long compared to the effect of Swedish massage therapy.

References

- Givi M. Durability of Effect of Massage Therapy on Blood Pressure. *Int J Prev Med.* May 2013; 4(5): 511-516.
- Supa'at I, Zakaria Z, Maskon O, Aminuddin A, and Nordin NA. Effects of Swedish Massage Therapy on Blood Pressure, Heart Rate, and Inflammatory Markers in Hypertensive Women. *Evid Based Complement Alternative Med.* 2013.