

## **What are the Benefits of Massage?**

Massage is the manual manipulation of muscles and other soft tissue in the body. This ancient method of healing dates back as far as 3,000 years ago to China. This natural way of laying hands on the body to soothe and comfort has become the basis for concentrating on the well being of the “whole being”. Massage serves as an adjunct, and for some, an alternative to medication. Its purpose is to naturally maintain the body’s optimal level of well being and health.

An increasing number of people are finding out what research has proven, that massage has many health benefits. The benefits of massage are not only physical, but also mental and emotional. The American Massage Therapy Association has summarized some of the benefits and research results. The following are a few of the benefits:

### **Physical:**

- Provide relaxation and stress reduction
- Relieve muscle tension and stiffness
- Reduce muscle spasms
- Increase joint flexibility and range of motion
- Enhance athletic performance
- Promote deeper and easier breathing
- Improve circulation of blood and lymph fluids
- Assist with removal of metabolic waste
- Reduce blood pressure
- Relieve tension related to headaches and eye strain
- Decrease recovery time from pulled muscles and sprained ligaments
- Reduce pain and swelling
- Reduce formation of excessive scar tissue
- Enhance the health and nourishment of the skin
- Strengthen the immune system

### **Mental:**

- Provide a relaxed state of alertness
- Reduce mental stress
- Improve body awareness
- Enhance capacity for thinking and creativity

### **Emotional:**

- Satisfy the need for safe, caring and nurturing touch
- Create a feeling of well-being
- Enhance self image
- Enable a greater ease of emotional expression
- Reduce levels of anxiety
- Increase awareness of the mind-body connection
- Provide a sense of unification and harmony