Massages for Anxiety

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Is Massage for Me When I Have Anxiety?

If you're looking for a way to help yourself or a child overcome anxiety, one out-of-the-box solution to use is massage.

You may be thinking to yourself, "I feel great after a massage. But are there any studies on it? Without 'proof' I'm not as comfortable going forward on anything." If so, here's a study that shows that anxiety may be helped by massage.

Here's your proof

This study was performed at the Touch Research Institute at the University of Miami School of Medicine in Florida. They tested 32 children with asthma who were between the ages of 4 and 14 years old. Children and adults who have asthma also have a high degree of anxiety. Anxiety is one of the symptoms tested in many studies on massage because it is a symptom that accompanies other symptoms in many health disorders.

Half of the children received massage for anxiety, and the other half received relaxation therapy by their parents each night before bed. The researchers taught the parents how to do both therapies. The massage or relaxation treatment was 20 minutes long.

Massage decreased cortisol levels and decreased anxiety levels after their first massage in the group of 4 to 8-year-olds. The results were immediate. Throughout the 30-day study, their lung functioning improved.

The kids who were 9 to 14 also reported lower levels of anxiety after their massage. Both groups had better attitudes about their asthma, too. The older children showed better lung function in only one area, but their lung improvement rose from 25% to 75%.

What Type of Massage Will Help You Best When You Have Anxiety?

There are many types of massage, and the best type for you is going to be the one that matches your personality the best. Below is a list of some of the types most likely to help:

1. **Swedish Massage** – This type of massage helps just about everyone. The only ones who might not like this massage are those who have already been receiving the benefits of massage for six months or more. They prefer other types of massage.
2. **Raindrop Therapy Massage** – It's the essential oils that are so powerful and effective at eliminating anxiety with this type of massage. Drops of essential oils are sprinkled onto the soles of the feet and then massaged in. You then lie on the massage table and allow the essential oils to do their work on your body. Another few essential oils are sprinkled onto your back, and the process is repeated. Surprisingly, this type of massage has the least amount of touch, yet you might feel the most benefits.

3. **Chocolate Massage** – This is a general type of massage but the massage lotion used has cocoa added to it. You smell chocolate during the session, so it's as if you are in heaven from the first whiff.
4. **Barefoot Massage** – This method of massage is a lot deeper than any of the previous types of massage because the massage therapist walks on your back. Their full weight is not on you though because they hold onto bars suspended from the ceiling and only use one foot. They can do better massage work with their feet than with their hands.

Now that you know a little bit about what types of massage might help anxiety, take the time to research them online and then start calling around for your first massage therapist and see the effects on your anxiety. It will be a fun journey.

Resource

Field, T., et al. Children with asthma have improved pulmonary function with massage therapy. J Pediatr 1998 May; 132 (5): 854-8.