

Living with MS

Massage Therapy and MS

Many people with multiple sclerosis (MS) use massage for prevention or relief of the following symptoms:

- **Spasticity** — Massage can help relax muscles and enhance range of motion exercises.
- **Pain** — Massage is useful in any condition in which a reduction in swelling or mobilization of tissues leads to pain relief. It can provide pleasurable stimulation, giving the person with MS a chance to relax, and relieving anxiety and fear. If massage is used as an aid for controlling pain, it should be used under the advice of a physician.
- **Poor circulation** — Massage can increase blood flow through superficial veins by use of friction, and through deeper arteries and veins by use of petrissage (massaging of skin that is gently lifted and squeezed). Massage can also increase capillary dilation through light stroking.
- **Pressure sores** — Massage may be helpful in preventing the development of pressure sores but should not be used if pressure sores or reddened areas of inflammation are present.
- **Stress reduction** — As part of the multiple sclerosis treatment, patients need to keep their stress levels low. Stress can worsen the symptoms or trigger them. Massage therapy can reduce the amount of stress multiple sclerosis patients have, and can help keep them calm.

Massage therapy can also help with fatigue, boost your mood, and improve physical and social functioning. You should consult a physician before receiving massage therapy if you have edema, osteoporosis, ulcers or enlargement of liver or spleen, cancer, arthritis, heart disease or are pregnant.

Several small studies have been done that show that massage therapy is safe for persons with MS and can be beneficial if done correctly. You want to find a massage therapist that is familiar with MS. Some therapists use heat that can affect MS patients or deep pressure which can cause patients to feel bruised or even more fatigued. Also, too much massage can exacerbate spasticity so having a therapist who has experience with MS is important.

You can find qualified and licensed massage therapists through the American Massage Therapy Association's website. <https://www.amtamassage.org/find-massage-therapist/>

Links:

<https://www.healthline.com/health/ms-massage>

<https://www.amtamassage.org/publications/massage-therapy-journal/stand-up-to-ms/>

<https://www.nationalmssociety.org/Treating-MS/Complementary-Alternative-Medicines/Massage-and-Body-Work>

Telehealth Appointments

As the COVID pandemic continues, our office will also continue to offer in person or telehealth appointments. There are some requirements for telehealth appointments however that we wanted to remind everyone of.

- Patients must have been seen in the last 12 months for a physical exam or chronic care visit.
- Must not have had 2 previous telehealth visits for the same acute condition ie (can not have been seen for a sinus infection twice and now want to be seen for that a third time via telehealth).
- Refills for controlled substances may be done once via telehealth visit and then must have an appointment in person.
- New patients must be seen for their first visit in person in order to establish care with a provider. After this they may have telehealth visits as determined appropriate.

Upcoming Events:

- Unfortunately, we have had to cancel this year's health fair and night of lights. We hope to be able to resume these events next year.
- Biogen has several virtual programs available for patients. You can find the full list and register at https://www.abovems.com/en_us/home/ms-support-events/ms-events.html
- Our office will be closed October 25th-29th for the CMSC conference. **Please plan ahead.** Routine medication refills will not be done by our office during this week and routine phone calls will not be returned. For emergency needs please contact the nurse's line at 402-443-1448.

General Information/Tips

- Saunders Medical Center has a patient portal. We encourage all of our patients to register and use the patient portal. To register for the portal please speak with registration either in person or at 402-443-4191.
- Please refrain from calling or texting Melissa or Aaron on their personal cell phones. If you have an emergency after hours please contact our nurse line at 402-443-1448.
- Due to our increasing patient load, we need to start charging patients who cancel their appointment less than **24 hours** in advance.
- Please arrive a **half hour** before your appointment to ensure there is adequate time for the check in process and our providers do not get behind for other patients.
- To schedule appointments please call registration at 402-443-4191. Our nurse is unable to schedule appointments and will have to transfer you.
- **Please call 402-443-4191 to notify Patti(ext 533) or Katherine(ext 539) if you have any change in your medical or prescription insurance. Also, please make sure to give registration both cards at check-in.**
- If you have questions regarding the newsletter, please email Sam sjack@smcne.com.

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