



Can Massage Support Treatment For Chronic Lung Disease?

WHAT IS MASSAGE?

Manual massage therapy involves applying different techniques such as gliding, kneading, friction or mobilisation to the soft tissues. It does not use mechanical devices and is reported to offer therapeutic effects such as supporting the function of the lymphatic system and increasing blood flow as well as skin temperature.

Our Purpose

Our purpose is to be a global facilitator of health and wellness through access, education and advancement of Traditional & Complementary Medicine (T&CM). The World Health Organization (WHO) advises that lifestyle-related diseases (or non-communicable diseases) are responsible for more than 70% of deaths worldwide each year.

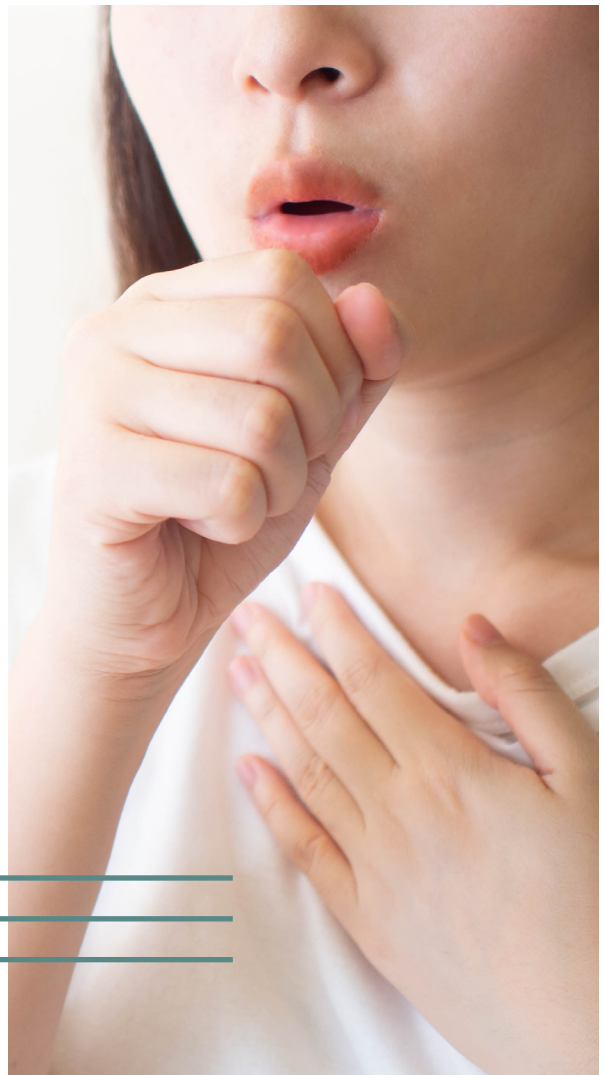
Knowledge represents empowerment. By sharing this evidence-based, peer-reviewed research, we aim to support everyday people to take ownership of their wellness, by making informed decisions and choices in conjunction with their health professional.

How This Study Could Help You Manage Chronic Lung Disease

The WHO estimates that on average, a person dies as a result of [chronic obstructive pulmonary disease \(COPD\) every 10 seconds](#). This review investigates the possible benefits of massage as part of the treatment for COPD, and is titled:

MANUAL MASSAGE THERAPY FOR PATIENTS WITH COPD: A SCOPING REVIEW.

You can read the full study here: <https://www.mdpi.com/1010-660X/55/5/151/htm>



Why Is This Study Important?

Difficulty with physical exertion is a hallmark of COPD, both due to shortness of breath and general fatigue, so the disease often restricts a person's physical activity. This may result in weakening of skeletal muscles, loss of weight and general physical deconditioning.

People suffering from COPD are also reported to have increased strain on specific muscle groups related to breathing, leading to dysfunction of the diaphragm and weakness around the chest and shoulders. Their symptoms may also include increased secretions of mucus in the lungs.

What Does This Mean For My Wellness?

The fact that the authors did not find evidence of massage alone producing significant results, might raise a question of whether the beneficial effects were not caused by the other therapies involved in the treatment programs. However, the studies reviewed reported positive results for the use of manual massage, leading to the conclusion that massage could play a supportive role alongside other therapeutic options such as physical exercise.

The percussive massage technique may be an effective way to help clear mucus from the lungs. Targeting key muscle groups may reduce tension, making it easier to breathe and facilitating other exercises that can support improvements in lung function. For people suffering from COPD, this may guide their choice of complementary therapies that may make their treatment program easier to manage, and possibly enhance their results.



How Does This Relate to Massage Therapy?

Research suggests massage may decrease pain and muscle tightness, as well as help clear mucus from the lungs. It is often used as part of a physiotherapy program, however although research has been done into physiotherapy as a treatment for COPD, evidence regarding whether massage “is a suitable therapeutic option” for COPD has been inconclusive.

In 2019, researchers affiliated with the Universities of Modena and Bologna in Italy conducted a scoping review to evaluate the effectiveness of manual massage techniques used in the treatment of COPD. Although previous research had been done into the effects of various types of manual treatment techniques, this review focused exclusively on manual massage therapy for COPD patients.

Key Findings About Massage Therapy for Chronic Lung Disease

- While the authors did not find substantial evidence to support using manual massage by itself as a treatment for COPD, they did report significant improvements in patients who received regular massage in conjunction with other treatments as part of a structured therapeutic program.
- The researchers reported that massage combined with other treatments, which included pharmaceutical medication in one of the reviewed studies, played a part in reducing blood pressure and improving lung function.
- The six-minute walking test is a measure of how well people with COPD and other conditions can handle physical exertion. This review suggested patients who underwent combined therapeutic programs of massage plus other treatments were able to walk significantly further after treatment.

Disclaimer: The above does not constitute medical advice, and as with any exercise or wellness program, please consult your medical professional before undertaking manual massage therapy.

[Medicina](#) is a peer-reviewed scientific journal of the Lithuanian University of Health Sciences issued in collaboration with the Lithuanian Medical Association, Vilnius University, Rīga Stradiņš University, the University of Latvia, and the University of Tartu, published online.

Quoted from journal description

References

[What is chronic obstructive pulmonary disease \(COPD\)? | World Health Organization](#)
[Manual Massage Therapy for Patients with COPD: A Scoping Review | MDPI](#)
[Massage | SoulAdvisor](#)
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