Can You Still Get Massages With COPD?

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Can COPD Sufferers Get Massages to Relax? You Bet!

There is a massage to go with every stage of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Massages will help you to relieve stress and reduce pain, just be aware of which type of massage will suit you best based on the stage of your COPD.

Stage One

In the beginning stage of COPD there are occasional bouts of shortness of breath and coughing. Still, you can select many different types of massage. For example, you could start out with the traditional Swedish massage, love the benefits so much that you end up getting Thai massage and deep tissue massage, and then even include some myofascial release therapy. Myofascial release therapy focuses on the connective tissue in between muscles and bones that can get tight and restrict movement.

After all these types of massage you can expect to feel more psychologically grounded, have less pain in your body, and feel more relaxed.

Stage Two

Stage two brings on breathing difficulties with exertion; however, you don't exert yourself in massage so all types may still be selected. However, there is one type of massage that may be troublesome: Thai massage. In this form, you will be actively moving into positions you have not been in for a long time, if ever. This could potentially bring on breathing difficulties, but every case is different and you'll have to test it for yourself.

Stage Three

In stage three of COPD it's more difficult to do simple daily activities. Thus, the only massages that will suit you in this stage would be ones where you allow the massage therapist to do everything for you.

You still have some options here: hot stone massage as long as you can lie face-down; reflexology foot massage, where points are pressed on your feet that connect to organs and glands to reduce stress, pain and tension; and lymphatic massage. In lymphatic massage, the touch is very light and the goal is to move fluids out of the lymphatic vessels, tonsils, spleen and thymus to facilitate a state where you are detoxified. When you are detoxified, you will feel better and all organs will operate more efficiently.

Stage Four

In stage four of COPD there's a severe reduction in airflow and it's difficult to move. Thus, any massage where you have to be an active participant is out. Raindrop therapy may be a good choice for you as long as you can lie

face-down. If you can’t, the massage therapist may be able to work with you to put you in a seated position.

The benefits of raindrop therapy massage come from the many essential oils used in the massage. Some of them, such as peppermint and wintergreen, will assist the body in clearing waste from the lungs and sinuses.

If raindrop therapy is too intense for you, a chair massage may be best, along with aromatherapy diffused into the air. Perhaps you could consider using eucalyptus essential oil as it’s known to quickly clear the airways.

Guidelines for COPD Massage

There are some things to remember about getting a message when you have COPD:

1. **You will experience the benefits of massage almost immediately, but don’t expect a miraculous recovery from your first one.** The benefits will pile up with successive massages, so make an appointment once a week for 10 weeks minimum. Then evaluate your progress.
2. **Remember to be fully hydrated when you get your massages.** Begin drinking extra water two days before your massage.
3. **Just as you drink water before a massage, continue this habit for two full days after your massage, bumping up consumption by at least a quart.** It will assist your body in detoxification.
4. **Massage benefits accumulate, so make a plan of more massages in the beginning, followed by fewer — not the other way around.** You want the greatest amounts of benefits in the end; having only an occasional massage allows you to take a step forward and then one backwards.

Now make that appointment — your body is asking for it!