

# **Elderly Massage**

## **Benefits of Therapeutic Massage for Senior Citizens**

By Arthur Bakeright

Elderly massage offers numerous benefits to our senior citizens which can greatly help to improve their health and wellbeing. This article looks at what is elderly massage, why it is valuable to society, and the benefits of massage for elderly citizens.

### **What Is Elderly Massage?**

Massage for elderly citizens is simply that, massage for the elderly, but it's application is certainly different to massage for the younger population and the massage therapist needs to be knowledgeable of the physiological changes that occur in the ageing body. Massage techniques are different, pressure applied is certainly different and there must be great sensitivity shown to the receivers feedback to ensure the massage is comfortable as well as effective.

A natural trend when we age is to become less active and this reduction in physical activity contributes to the reduction of the quality of life experienced by many of our senior citizens. Many studies have shown that elderly massage therapy can be of significant benefit in managing the effects of aging such as arthritis and a host of other physical ailments.

The NCBTMB (National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork) has promoted the use of elderly massage for years. Although there is a general awareness of massage for elderly citizens, there is a poor understanding of its direct benefits.

### **Why Is Elderly Massage Valuable To Us As A Society?**

First there is the obvious; we have an ageing population and we should naturally seek effective modes of care for our elderly as they are our parents and grand parents, and we are all on a journey to where they are.

There are also more pragmatic motives as a society. Health care expenditure is predominantly made up of caring for our elderly, so any therapy that reduces the negative effectives of ageing on our health is also beneficial to our society as a whole. This is true in a financial sense, but also because society would benefit from having a healthier and thus happier and more productive older population.

### **Benefits of Elderly Massage**

- According to the Touch Research Institute, elderly massage is very useful in the treatment of Alzheimer's patients. It has shown to facilitate relaxation and communication.
- It can greatly assist in arthritic pain management.
- Massage for elderly citizens helps to increase their range of motion.
- Also promotes natural joint lubrication, which is extremely important for arthritis sufferers.
- Helps to increase strength and muscle coordination.
- Boosts natural energy levels and mental awareness.
- Can also greatly improve posture by reducing muscle tension. This has the added benefit of assisting seniors with a higher quality of rest, and helps them to sleep deeper and longer which can have a significant effect on their general health and well being.
- Can also have a profound calming effect which in turn helps them to deal with medical interventions they may need to experience in dealing with various conditions.

Pain management in the elderly is predominantly treated through pharmaceutical methods, but thankfully, more people are becoming aware of the benefits of elderly massage therapy.

Massage for elderly citizens is a natural solution to many ailments associated with the ageing process, and has proven to be an effective complimentary therapy to assist and improve the efficacy of conventional treatments.