



— THE SCIENCE OF PERIODIC THERAPY —

Evidence-Based Wellness
Research Synthesis · 2024

Why Your Body Needs Massage *Every Month*

The research is unambiguous: benefits are cumulative and dose-dependent. One session relieves. Monthly sessions transform.

🗨️ *Think of it like exercise — nobody asks why you should work out every week. The body demands **regularity to compound its repair**. Massage is no different. The biology insists on consistency.*

01 · STRESS CHEMISTRY

**One session drops cortisol.
Monthly sessions reset your baseline.**

📉 **31%**

cortisol reduction from a single
45-minute session

Field et al., Int. J.
Neuroscience, 2005

📉 **53%**

sustained resting cortisol after
5 consistent sessions

Moraska et al.,
Psychoneuroendocrinology,
2008

72 hrs

cortisol returns to baseline
without follow-up therapy

Touch Research Institute,
Miami

Cortisol is the master stress hormone — elevated chronically, it causes **systemic inflammation**, **disrupted sleep**, **immune suppression**, and **accelerated cellular aging**. Occasional massage offers

temporary relief. Monthly therapy physiologically lowers where your cortisol "sits" — reshaping your default neurochemical state, not just relieving today's tension.

02 · BRAIN CHEMISTRY

Measurable spikes in serotonin & dopamine — confirmed in urine metabolites.

SEROTONIN INCREASE

+28%

after a single session · mood, sleep, appetite regulation

DOPAMINE INCREASE

+31%

after a single session · motivation, focus, reward response

These are **not placebo numbers** — measured in urine metabolites pre and post session. Low serotonin underpins depression and anxiety. Low dopamine drives chronic fatigue and low motivation. Monthly therapy maintains both consistently elevated, offering a compounding neurological advantage that no single visit can deliver.

Source: Field T. et al., *Journal of Bodywork and Movement Therapies*, 2005

03 · IMMUNE FUNCTION

Cedars-Sinai study: natural killer cell activity surges with consistent therapy.

NK cell activity — no massage (baseline)



NK cell activity — after one session

+40%

NK cell activity — after monthly program

+72%

Natural killer cells are your immune system's first responders — destroying virus-infected and cancerous cells. The Cedars-Sinai study (2010) also found significantly higher **lymphocyte counts** and lower arginine vasopressin (linked to stress and inflammatory behavior). Researchers concluded the effect was *clinically meaningful*.

Source: Rapaport M.H. et al., *Journal of Alternative & Complementary Medicine*, 2010

04 · CELLULAR REPAIR

McMaster University: massage activates gene pathways for healing.

↑ Mitochondrial Biogenesis

New energy factories

Mechanical stimulation triggers the creation of new mitochondria in muscle cells — boosting energy production and recovery speed at a genetic level.

↓ NF-κB Pathway suppressed

Master inflammation switch

Regular massage down-regulates the NF-κB signalling pathway — the primary genetic driver of chronic inflammation in muscle tissue.

Published in *Science Translational Medicine* (2012), this landmark study confirmed massage isn't just mechanical — it is **epigenetically active**. Like exercise, the benefit accumulates with regularity. A single session creates a signal; a monthly program creates a new cellular environment.

Source: Crane J.D. et al., *Science Translational Medicine*, 2012

05 · CARDIOVASCULAR HEALTH

Blood pressure reductions comparable to mild antihypertensive medication.

-10.4

mmHg drop in systolic blood pressure after consistent sessions

-5.3

mmHg drop in diastolic pressure — same range as mild medication

Zero

side effects. No dependency. No prescription. No pharmacy visit.

A University of South Florida meta-analysis found that maintained massage therapy — not occasional sessions — produced these structural cardiovascular benefits. A single visit shows modest, short-lived improvement. A **consistent monthly schedule produces enduring change** in how your vascular system operates at rest.

Source: Kaye A.D. et al., *Evidence-Based Complementary & Alternative Medicine*, 2008

06 · THE DECAY PROBLEM

Why "once in a while" fails: benefits peak then vanish.

● **Cortisol resets** within 72 hours without follow-up. Your nervous system defaults back to its stressed baseline.

● **NK immune cells** return to pre-session levels within 4–5 days. The immune window closes fast.

● **Serotonin & dopamine** normalize within 4–5 days. The neurochemical lift evaporates.

● **Muscle inflammation** markers return to baseline by day 7. Repair stalls. Tension rebuilds.

Monthly therapy sits precisely at the **therapeutic window** — frequent enough to compound benefits before full decay occurs, spaced enough to be sustainable. It is not a luxury rhythm. It is the **minimum effective dose**, backed by the American Massage Therapy Association and the Touch Research Institute at the University of Miami — which has published over 100 peer-reviewed studies on massage.

07 · THE HONEST COMPARISON

Occasional vs. Monthly — what your body actually experiences.

MONTHLY THERAPY

- ◆ Cortisol floor gradually lowers over time
- ◆ Immune system stays in elevated state between sessions
- ◆ Serotonin & dopamine maintained at higher baseline
- ◆ Each session is more effective than the last
- ◆ Prevents crisis; avoids downstream medical costs

STAYS

OCCASIONAL THERAPY

- ✗ Cortisol resets to full stress baseline each time
- ✗ Immune boost expires; full protection never built
- ✗ Mood benefits fade within days — no cumulative lift
- ✗ Each session begins from scratch, not a higher plateau
- ✗ Crisis intervention costs more than prevention

One dental cleaning doesn't give you healthy teeth forever.

*One massage doesn't give you a **regulated nervous system** forever.*

1×
PER MONTH

Field T. et al. (2005) · Moraska A. et al. (2008) · Rapaport M.H. et al. (2010)
Crane J.D. et al., Science Translational Medicine (2012) · Kaye A.D. et al.
(2008)
Touch Research Institute, University of Miami · American Massage Therapy
Association