



# Can Massage Therapy Help Heal America?



## Abstract:

In America, 192 people overdose every day on opioids resulting in about 116 deaths. With addictions and death tolls rising, physicians are now turning to massage therapy to help aid in the healing process. According to the National Institute of Health, massage therapy is a great way to manage everyday pain. While massage therapy can help ease the aches and pains of Fibromyalgia, low back pain, tension headaches, and Arthritis, it can also be used as an alternative measure to substitute for opioids. This non-addictive alternative is applied by trained professionals. (Their skilled and practiced application of time tested procedures directly apply the phrase "first, do no harm" which is sworn to by today's doctors). By using massage therapy to replace opioids, it can help decrease the number of potentially addicted individuals, and work to reduce the opioid epidemic plaguing America today.

## Introduction:

What is Chronic Pain? Chronic pain is a constant pain that lingers for an extended amount of time. It can last weeks, months, and even years. Many Americans suffer from chronic pain everyday. Chronic pain can be the products of physical, emotional, and mental trauma. This can cause a decrease in an individual's quality of life. Chronic pain does not discriminate. Someone in a car accident could have pain similar to someone with Fibromyalgia. With a presence of constant pain, an individual will seek any relief possible, for most with guidance of a physician. Opioids are a fast and easy way to mask pain. Unfortunately, physicians have prescribed opioids to mask pain, but it has resulted in an even bigger pain than America could have ever imagined. Many people have become addicted to pain medication (opioids) and will do anything to get their hands on that fix.

## Objective:

Massage Therapy can be used as a form of pain management. This natural alternative is known to help heal, not mask, the ailments of chronic pain. With the opioid epidemic in America, Massage Therapy could help reduce the amount of opioids given to individuals who suffer from chronic pain. By reducing the amount of opioids given to Americans, the amount of addicted individuals would not increase, and in return decrease as a whole.



## Research:

- Research shows people who suffer from chronic lower back pain can benefit, and improve their quality of life by seeing a Massage Therapist. This form of pain management is non-addictive and is taken by more insurance companies than in the past.
- In October of 2017, the American Massage Therapy Association met with state officials at the Appalachian Opioid Conference and discussed how to integrate massage therapy into a better, and healthier approach to pain management. This in return would help the national opioid epidemic.
- The U.S. Senate Health, Education, Labor & Pension Committee held a hearing to find approaches for pain management that did not involve any pharmaceuticals, like Massage Therapy.

## Conclusion:

America has a nationwide epidemic, rooted in opioid use. Physicians are looking into non-pharmaceutical approaches to help deal with the pain, and reduce the use of opioids. With the use of Massage Therapy for pain management, chronic pain sufferers will find a sense of relief and improve their quality of life. Thus, the use and distribution of opioids will decrease, resulting in the decrease of opioid related deaths in America.

## Work Cited:

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