

Consumers' Use of Massage on the Rise

A survey of U.S. consumers about their massage use shows that 25 million more Americans each year are getting a massage today than they did 10 years ago, with 39 million American adults—more than one out of every six—getting massage annually. Older baby boomers (ages 55 to 64), in particular, have tripled their use of massage over the past 10 years, as have those ages 65 and older.

Also among the survey results:

- With the growth in popularity and use of massage therapy, more people are discussing it with their doctors and health-care providers. Nine million more people discussed massage therapy with their doctor or health-care provider this year than five years ago.
- More health-care professionals are recommending massage therapy as part of a patient's overall health: Almost twice as many doctors recommended it to their patients this year than five years ago, among those who discussed massage therapy with their doctors.
- While physicians led the way for recommending massage therapy when asked (59 percent), nearly half of all chiropractors (48 percent) and physical therapists (47 percent) also recommended massage when patients inquired.
- Seventy-nine percent of 25- to 35-year-olds would like to have their health-insurance plan cover massage, the highest percentage among age groups; 63 percent of Americans would be more inclined to try massage therapy if it was offered in conjunction with other health-care treatments.
- While relaxation (26 percent) is still a motive for Americans integrating massage into their routines, using massage therapy for medical purposes (30 percent) such as injury recovery, pain reduction, headache control, and for their overall health and wellness, is even more prevalent,
- Use of massage per year at least doubled in all regions: the Northeast up from 9 percent to 18 percent; the South up from 7 percent to 16 percent; and the West up from 11 percent to 19 percent.

The survey was the 10th annual massage-therapy survey of American consumers conducted for the American Massage Therapy Association (AMTA), with results released in late October.

The annual consumer survey was conducted by Opinion Research Corporation International August 10-13, 2006, among a national probability sample of 1,013 adults (508 men and 505 women) ages 18 and older, living in private households in the continental United States. The survey has a confidence level of plus or minus three percent.

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