

MEDIA RELEASE

29 September 2010

MASSAGE THERAPY PROVEN TO BOOST THE IMMUNE SYSTEM AND FIGHT STRESS

New research * shows that not only does massage feel good and relax your muscles; it also lowers levels of stress hormones and boosts the immune system.

Researchers at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles looked at the physiological effects of a single massage: either a 45-minute session of deep-tissue Swedish massage or a session of light massage.

Volunteers who received Swedish massage experienced significant decreases in levels of the stress hormone cortisol and increases in the number of lymphocytes, white blood cells that are part of the immune system. The light massage caused increases in oxytocin, a hormone associated with contentment and decreases in adrenal corticotropin hormone, which stimulates the adrenal glands to release cortisol. Other changes were also measured

“Massage therapists have long been aware that our treatments have benefits which are more than skin deep and it’s about time that scientific research caught up,” says Marianne Macdonald, Executive Officer of Massage New Zealand (MNZ).

“Massage therapy is an increasingly popular choice for maintaining health. However many people would be horrified to learn that anyone in New Zealand can set up in business as a massage therapist, with no training or experience whatsoever. We would urge people to choose an MNZ registered therapist, by visiting our website www.massagenewzealand.org Find a Therapist national database, to ensure treatment from a trained professional.” says Ms Macdonald.

For more information contact MNZ Executive Officer Marianne Macdonald on 0800 367 669 or 021 0232 5558; www.massagenewzealand.org.nz

* Hyman Rapaport, M; Schettler, P.; Bresee, C. The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine; *A Preliminary Study of the Effects of a Single Session of*

Swedish Massage on Hypothalamic–Pituitary–Adrenal and Immune Function in Normal Individuals. Online Ahead of Print: September 1, 2010

Full study available <http://www.liebertonline.com/doi/abs/10.1089/acm.2009.0634>