

Sports Massage

Sreenivasa T¹ and Shylendrakumar S J²

¹Physical Education Director Sree Honnadevi Government First Grade College,
Dandinashivara, Turvekere Taluk, Tumkur District, Karnataka, India. Email: sricrown@gmail.com

²Physical Education Director Government First Grade College, Chikkanaikanahalli Taluk, Tumkur District, Karnataka,
India. Email: shylendrakumarsj@gmail.com

Abstract—Massage is a popular treatment choice of athletes, coaches, and sports physical therapists. Despite its purported benefits and frequent use, evidence demonstrating its efficacy is scarce. To identify current literature relating to sports massage and its role in effecting an athlete's psychological readiness, in enhancing sports performance, in recovery from exercise and competition, and in the treatment of sports related musculoskeletal injuries.

Index Terms— massage, sports injuries, athletic injuries, physical therapy, rehabilitation.

I. INTRODUCTION

Massage has been utilized in the treatment of illness and injury for thousands of years by health care practitioners. Chinese writings dating back to 2500 BC describe the use of this modality for a variety of medical purposes. Massage has been promoted as a treatment of choice for numerous conditions such as musculoskeletal injuries, cancer, stress, relaxation, and pregnancy.

Physical therapists who specialize in sports medicine often utilize massage techniques to aid an athlete's recovery from intense exercise or as a treatment option when performing clinical rehabilitation. Sports massage has been suggested as a means to help prepare an athlete for competition, as a tool to enhance athletic performance, as a treatment approach to help the athlete recover after exercise or competition, and as a manual therapy intervention for sports-related musculoskeletal injuries. While massage is frequently performed by physical therapists (and other healthcare or alternative medicine practitioners) and is popular with athletes and coaches, its actual efficacy is questionable.

The purpose of this paper is to know and present the current literature relating to sports massage and its roles in effecting an athlete's psychological readiness, in enhancing sports performance, in recovery from exercise and competition.

II. BENEFITS OF SPORTS MASSAGE

- Reduce muscle tension
- Help athletes monitor muscle tone
- Promote relaxation
- Increase range of motion

- Improve soft tissue function

Individuals who participate in exercise and athletic programs who seek enhanced performance, improved conditioning, faster recovery, injury prevention, and assistance in maintaining peak fitness can benefit from massage therapy given by professional massage therapists working within their scope of practice.

Massage Technique which uses a Variety of Superficial Strokes:

- Effleurage
- Petrissage
- Tapotment
- Vibration

Sports massage is a type of Swedish massage that stimulates circulation of blood and lymphatic fluids, by focusing on sectional therapy to break release knotted muscles and increase range of motion. There are two different types of sports massage; one therapy focuses on preventative maintenance and the other focuses on rehabilitation.

III. PREVENTATIVE PRE-EVENT SPORTS MASSAGE:

Generally pre-event therapy is a short, stimulating massage given 15 – 45 minutes before your event. Focusing on the major parts of the body that will be exerted during the event, a sports massage can be carried out prior to a sports event, when it will stimulate circulation, calm nervous tension and prepare you for optimal performance while reducing the risk of injury.

IV. REHABILITATING POST-EVENT SPORTS MASSAGE:

Post-event therapy is most effective when given within an hour or two of the event, to normalize the body's tissues. It can be carried out after a sports event, when it will relieve soreness and assist with the removal of lactic acid and other waste products. It is often used during training, when the practitioner will focus on speeding up the healing of existing injuries and preventing the development of future injuries.

V. USING SPORTS MASSAGE TO MAINTAIN HEALTH:

A sports massage is a good choice if you have a specific sports-related injury – a tender knee from running, for instance. The therapy is generally focused on the problem area – pulled muscles and over-used joints – rather than giving you a thorough full body massage. The focus on treating soft tissue aches, pain and injuries that are associated with recreational activities. Massage can reduce muscle stiffness and improve relaxation by reducing heart rate and blood pressure.

However, for most athletes, both professional and amateur, enjoying less muscle pain and stiffness and improving sense of relaxation and well-being is reason enough to enjoy regular massage.

VI. CONCLUSION

Sportsmassage plays a vital role in pre and post event competitionof an athlete's psychological readiness, in enhancing sports performance, in recovery from exercise and competition, and in the treatment of sports related musculoskeletal injuries. Additional studies examining the physiological and psychological effects of sports massage are necessary in order to enhance the sports physical therapists' ability to develop and implement clinically significant evidence based programs or treatments.

REFERENCES

- [1] Goats GC. Massage – the scientific basis of an ancient art: Part 1. The techniques. Br J Sports Med. 1994;28:149–152.
- [2] Cassar MP. Handbook of Clinical Massage: A Clinical Guide for Studentsand Practitioners. 2nd ed.Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone; [2004].
- [3] Holey E, Cook E. Evidence-Based Therapeutic Massage. A Practical Guide for Vickers A, Zollman C. ABC of complementary medicine: Massage therapies. BMJ. 1999;319:1254–1257.
- [4] Galloway SD, Watt JM. Massage provision by physiotherapists at major athletics events between 1987 and 1998. Br J Sports Med. 2004;38:235–237.

- [5] Nichols AW, Harrigan R. Complementary and alternative medicine usage by intercollegiate athletes. *Clin J Sport Med.* 2006;16:232–237.
- [6] Callaghan MJ. The role of massage in the management of the athlete: A review. *Sports Med.* 1993;27:28–33.
- [7] Br J Benjamin PJ, Tappan FM. *Tappan's Handbook of Healing Massage Techniques: Classic, Holistic, and Emerging Methods.* 4th ed. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey.
- [8] Google search.