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## **Making Your List and Checking it Twice? Giving the Gift of Massage is Just As Nice, Offers The Colorado Chapter of the American Massage Therapy Association**

DENVER— “The holiday season is one of the most stressful times of year between parties at work, friends and family coming to visit and fighting the crowds to get through your holiday gift list,” suggests Jonathan Bergstrom, president of the Colorado chapter of the American Massage Therapy Association (AMTA). “Giving the gift of massage will be most appreciated by loved ones since it can help reduce stress and relieve muscle tension that can occur during the holiday period.”

### **Gift Cards Growing as Holiday Gift Choice**

According to recent reports, giving gift cards for products and services is estimated to be worth \$35 billion this year. While gift cards allow the receiver to choose to buy an item they specifically need or want, giving a massage gift card or certificate also does the same thing. It allows the person receiving it to choose from a variety of massage therapy techniques too.

Whether looking for an individual massage therapist or getting a massage at a day spa or hotel resort spa, many offer special packages for gift giving.

### **A Variety of Massage Therapy Techniques Are Available To Ease Holiday Stress**

First, there are different types of massage to help soothe tense muscles from lugging heavy shopping bags from holiday shopping, take care of a nagging back aches from hauling heavy Christmas trees or stringing up the outdoor lights or as part of a program for general well being. And, there are many terms for types of massage that the AMTA designates as massage modalities.

Be sure to ask the massage therapist what massage modality will give you the results you want in your particular situation.

The most popular include:

- *Swedish massage*: The most common type of massage, to relax and energize you.
- *Deep tissue massage*: For muscle damage from an injury, such as whiplash or back strain.
- *Sports massage*: To help prevent athletic injury, keep the body flexible and heal the body should injury occur.
- *Chair massage*: Massage of the upper body, while fully clothed and seated in a special portable chair.

Finding a qualified massage therapist is very important. Ask your massage therapist about his or her credentials. And remember, each massage and bodywork modality requires specialized training.

### **What Questions Can I Ask A Massage Therapist Before Buying a Gift Certificate?**

The AMTA, which requires members meet education standards, recommends asking the following questions before choosing a massage therapist for yourself or friends:

1. Did you graduate from a program accredited by the Commission on Massage Therapy Accreditation (COMTA) or from an AMTA member school?
2. Since Colorado does not require certification for a massage license or registration, have you been licensed in any other states?
3. Are you a member of AMTA?
4. Are you certified by the National Certification Board of Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork?
5. Do you have training in any specific massage modalities and if so, what types of training, certification or degree have you received in these massage modalities?
6. How long have you been a therapist in those modalities?
7. I'd like to buy a gift certificate; do you offer any?
8. If so, what are your pricing and do you offer any special packages?
9. Do you have any brochures or handouts I can give with the gift certificate?
10. What is your return policy regarding gift certificates? Is there an expiration date?

### **Who Can I Ask to Find A Qualified Massage Therapist?**

To find a qualified massage therapist near your home or work to discuss the benefits of regular massage therapy as part of health management, the AMTA *Find a Massage Therapist* national locator service can help you through its free online service at [www.amtamassage.org](http://www.amtamassage.org) or toll-free at 888-THE-AMTA.

### ***About American Massage Therapy Association® , Colorado Chapter***

The Colorado Chapter of the American Massage Therapy Association has more than 1,300 members throughout Colorado. The chapter is dedicated to furthering the professionalism of the massage therapy field and educating consumers on the benefits and use of massage in maintaining active and healthy lifestyles. For more information, visit [www.amtacolorado.org](http://www.amtacolorado.org).

The American Massage Therapy Association is a non-profit, professional association with more than 56,000 members throughout the United States and in some 27 other countries. The Association is directed by volunteer leadership chosen through its national election and fosters ongoing, direct-member-involvement through its 51 chapters.

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