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Massage Can Provide Relief from Smoking Withdrawals, Offers The Colorado Chapter of the American Massage Therapy Association

DENVER— Were you one of the thousands of people who quit smoking in November as part of the Great American Smokeout? We know it's hard – and stressful. What can you do to help you through this process? You should consider adding massage to your cessation program to help ease you through the nicotine withdrawals, suggests the Colorado chapter of the American Massage Therapy Association (AMTA).

“While massage therapy plays an integral part in maintaining a healthy lifestyle, this therapy can also alleviate symptoms associated with smokers as they stop their smoking habit,” says Jonathan Bergstrom, president of the Colorado chapter of the AMTA. “We can help you ask the right questions so you can find a massage therapist who is experienced working with patients and their withdrawal symptoms due to smoking.”

Attempts at smoking cessation have been correlated with severe withdrawal symptoms, including intense cigarette cravings, anxiety, and depressed mood. Massage therapy has been shown to reduce anxiety and stress hormones and improve mood.

If you are a smoker looking for some relief, here are a few things you need to know.

A Variety of Massage Therapy Techniques Are Available

First, there are different types of massage to help take care of different situations or health conditions. And, there are many terms for types of massage. The AMTA designates the various methods 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.
- *Chair massage*: Massage of the upper body, while fully clothed and seated in a special portable chair.

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Finding a qualified massage therapist is also 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 Before I Choose A Massage Therapist?

The AMTA, which requires members meet education standards, recommends asking your massage therapist the following questions:

1. Did you graduate from a program accredited by the Commission on Massage Therapy Accreditation (COMTA) or from an AMTA member school?
2. How often do you attend additional classes from an accredited school to maintain your skills?
3. Since Colorado does not require certification for a massage license or registration, have you been licensed in any other states?
4. Are you a member of AMTA?
5. Are you certified by the National Certification Board of Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork?
6. Do you have training in any specific massage modalities?
7. If so, what type of training, certification or degree have you received in these massage modalities?
8. How long have you been a therapist in those modalities?

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 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.

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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