

# Rub each other up the right way

4 May 2017



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Giving your partner a massage can improve both their wellbeing and yours.

That is the key finding of research by Sayuri Naruse and Dr Mark Moss from Northumbria University that is being presented today, Thursday 4 May 2017, at the British Psychological Society's Annual Conference in Brighton.

Ms Naruse, the lead researcher, commented:

"The benefits of receiving a massage from a professional are well documented, but this research shows how a similar outcome can be obtained by couples with little prior training and experience of the activity."

A total of 38 participants completed a three-week massage course, assessing their wellbeing via questionnaires before and after massage sessions across eight areas of physical and mental wellbeing, [stress](#), coping and relationship satisfaction.

The couples' wellbeing, perceived stress and coping was positively impacted by the massage course, with none of these effects having significantly decreased at a follow up three weeks after the end of the reporting period.

Couples also found that their physical and emotional wellbeing had significantly improved following the completion of each massage session.

Crucially, this was equally apparent whether the participant was giving or receiving the massage.

Of the couples who took part in the study, 91 per cent said that they would recommend mutual massage to their friends and family.

With past research having shown that couples tend to operate as a pair when coping with stress, giving each other a massage may also help to ensure relationship stability.

Ms Naruse added:

"These findings show that massage can be a simple and effective way for [couples](#) to improve their physical and mental [wellbeing](#) whilst showing affection for one another.

"Our data also suggests that these positive effects of a short massage course may be long lasting, as is reflected in 74 per cent of the sample continuing to use [massage](#) after the course had finished.

"Massage is a cost effective and pleasant intervention that isn't just for a therapeutic setting but can be easily incorporated into a healthy couple's daily routine."

**More information:** [www.bps.org.uk/ac2017](http://www.bps.org.uk/ac2017)

Provided by British Psychological Society

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