



**MESSAGE THERAPY  
CERTIFICATION  
PROGRAM  
COURSE CATALOG**

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## Program Overview

The Massage Therapy Certificate Program is a 655- or 750-hour program that prepares students for national exams and a successful career in massage. The program is split up into twelve educational modules and utilizes well over 200 hours of in-person and hands-on training, as well as a convenient distance learning format to give students flexibility in how they complete the program. With an emphasis on self-care as a guiding principle, Pyramid graduates will have a solid foundation to build a lifetime career in professional massage.

## Introduction to Massage

This course introduces students to foundational material about the field of massage, including the history of massage therapy, and an overview of massage styles and techniques. Students in this class will gain the understanding and confidence to move forward with their professional development.

## Anatomy and Physiology 1

At the Pyramid, we teach anatomy and physiology with an emphasis on the application of knowledge to the practice of massage. In this first course, students will learn about the body systems and their functions and interactions, including the language of anatomy, basic biology necessary for massage therapists to understand, and the skeletal, muscular, digestive, respiratory, nervous, cardiovascular, urinary, and reproductive systems.

## Anatomy and Physiology 2

In the second course of anatomy and physiology, we will break down each body part, exploring more in depth the muscles and bones of the body, especially as they relate to giving a massage. Students will leave this course with both a theoretical and practical understanding of the human body, and will have the confidence necessary to give a safe and effective massage.

## Aromatherapy

From simply selecting the fragrances of massage oils to using aromatherapy in the massage treatment room, massage therapists today can offer added benefit to their clients by understanding the use of scents.

Students in this course will gain knowledge about essential oils and the how they effect us physiologically

and emotionally, delivery mechanisms, and contraindications.

## Body Wraps

Since it is estimated that one third of all massage students will end up working in a spa setting, this course is offered to provide students with an overview of what body wraps are, and how to effectively use them alone or in conjunction with massage.

## Chair Massage (Optional)

Although not required for the completion of this program, students may elect to take an additional course in learning chair massage. At the end of this course, students will have mastered techniques of chair massage, including body mechanics to make it as comfortable as possible for the therapist.

## CPR

Some states and work settings require massage therapists to be certified in CPR. Regardless, it is common sense for massage therapists to know this life-saving technique, so the Pyramid program requires all students to become certified. Students can opt to take this part of the program elsewhere, or they can participate in a CPR training on site.

## Deep Tissue/Sports Massage Techniques

This course introduces massage students to the techniques of deep tissue and sports massage through presentations on technique and hands-on experiential training. By the end of this course, students will have a clear understanding of how to use techniques to help athletes and non-athletes alike experience the relief that deep tissue and sports massage have to offer.

## Gem and Crystal Massage

Combining the natural healing elements of gems and crystals with massage can create an exciting and powerful experience for clients. Students in this class will learn simple identification of stones and will learn when and how to use them in the clinical massage setting.

## Hot Stone Massage Techniques

In this course, students will learn the basics of using hot stones alone or in conjunction with other massage modalities. Through presentations on technique and hands-on experiential training, students will leave this course feeling well-prepared to offer this increasingly popular massage. Students will also have a solid understanding of safety practices necessary when offering this service.

## Introduction to Cupping

This course offers students an overview and basic understanding of how to use the ancient, non-invasive part of Chinese medicine known as cupping. With an emphasis on technique and contraindications, students will leave this course with a solid foundation of how to use cupping alone or in conjunction with other massage techniques to alleviate a wide variety of client issues.

## Advanced Cupping (Optional)

Although not required for the completion of this program, students may elect to take an intensive training in the advanced techniques of cupping.

## Introduction to the Business of Massage

In this course, students will become familiar with all aspects of running a successful massage business, from advertising and marketing to special legal considerations. The class will also focus on the development of the self as a professional, starting a small business and building a practice, basic listening and communication skills, and creative ideas to keep clients coming back. At the completion of this course, students will be well-prepared to start their own practice.

## Kinesiology

Simply put, kinesiology is the study of how muscles and bones work together to create movement in the body.

Students will learn about this movement through presentations and hands-on practical application using anatomical and mechanical principles. There is also a special overview of corrective gymnastics that will help the massage student learn how to use kinesiology to help their clients improve their overall physical well-being.

## Massage Practice Ethics

Nowadays, the study and application of ethics is vitally important to every massage therapist. In this course, students will learn the difference between assessment and diagnosis, defining the scope of one's practice, laws, liability, and insurance, certification and licensing, and other ethical situations and how to handle them that may come up during practice. Students will have the opportunity to meet massage therapists and find out what ethical issues really do come up in practice.

## Pathology

Pathology is a vitally important area of study for the massage student because it helps the developing professional understand which conditions might require modifications to the usual massage techniques, or even when massage might be contraindicated. In this course, students will learn about the history of pathology, restrictions and contraindications of massage, skin diseases, microbiology, and minerals and their impact on the human body.

## Pregnancy Massage

The physical and emotional challenges presented to the mother during pregnancy are immense, and massage is increasingly recognized as one service that can be helpful. However, some modifications and safety concerns must be addressed for a massage to be safe for the mother and child. In this course, students will learn about the special adaptations and safety concerns necessary for offering massage to mothers to be. This course includes hands-on experiential learning.

## Reflexology

Reflexology is an ancient technique of massaging the hands and feet that is becoming increasingly popular in the United States. Students in this course will learn the historical and theoretical principles of reflexology, as well as its application, and will leave this course with an understanding of how to offer reflexology alone or in conjunction with other types of massage.

## Reiki and other Energy Modalities

Students in this course will learn about energy flow, and will specifically study various types of energy modalities that are becoming more popular as time goes on. At the completion of this course, students will be attuned to Reiki Level I, and will understand how to offer Reiki on its own or integrated with other types of massage.

## Reiki Level II (Optional)

Although not required for the completion of this program, students may opt to take an additional workshop on Reiki. At the completion of this course, students will be attuned to level II Reiki, allowing them to intensify their Reiki use and use it by distance.

## Self-Care for the Massage Therapist

Being a massage therapist can be demanding physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Many massage therapists reach burn-out and end up leaving the profession after a short time in business. In this course, as well as in all of the Pyramid program courses, there is a strong emphasis on self-care to prevent burn-out. Students will learn in detail about various aspects of wellness and how to apply them to their work and life so that the physical and emotional demands of the massage practice are minimized.

## Swedish Massage Techniques 1

This course provides students with a working knowledge of Swedish massage, one of the most popular types of massage offered in the United States. The course will incorporate presentations on technique with hands-on experiential training, with an emphasis on developing a solid 50-minute massage framework. Students will also learn proper body mechanics for giving a massage.

## Swedish Massage Techniques 2

In this course, students will continue practicing the techniques taught in Swedish Massage Techniques 1, with an emphasis on developing a 45-minute massage framework, as well as a European massage framework. Students will also learn new ways to minimize stress during the practice of massage.

### Clinical Practice

The final piece of the program is a highly-structured clinical practice experience where students work first with supervision on people they know, and then on people they do not know via a well-established massage clinic setting. Students will complete a minimum of 200 hours, culminating in a 5 hour exercise demonstrating practical knowledge to the program instructors. Students must successfully complete the clinical work and the practical exercise before receiving their certificate.