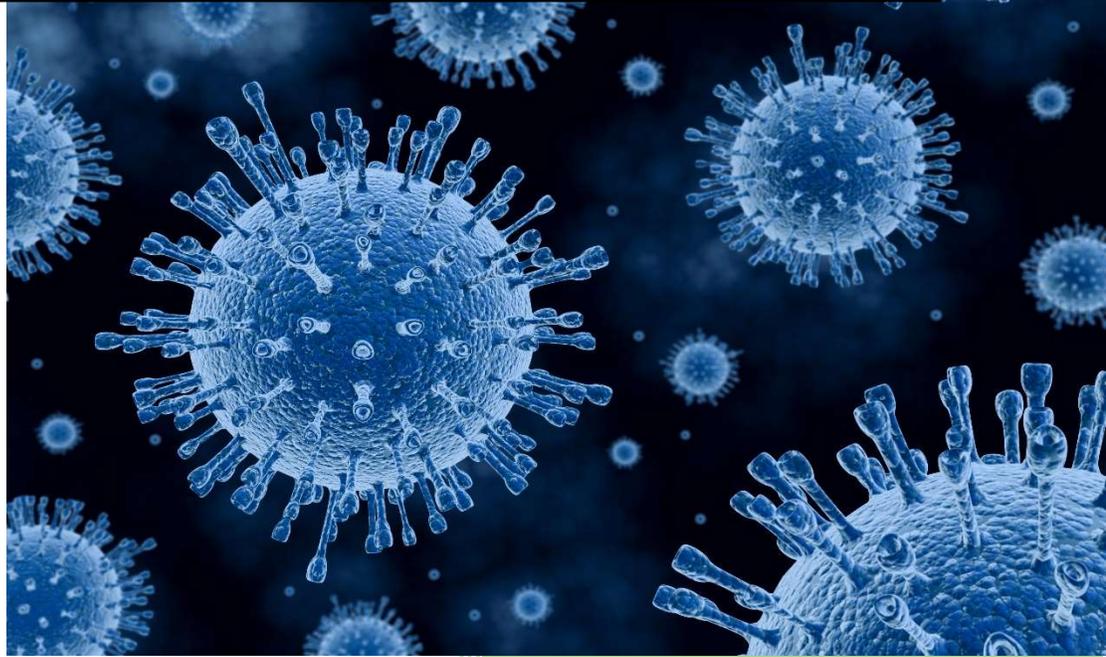




2021

# COVID-19 AMONG MASSAGE THERAPISTS SURVEY REPORT



## **Covid-19 Among Massage Therapists Survey Report 2021**

### **INTRODUCTION**

USOLMT conducted a small survey called “Covid-19 Among Massage Therapists” from June 2021-August 2021. The survey was taken by 12 random respondents across the United States. While this is only a very small snapshot of how massage therapists are handling the challenge of Covid-19 in their practices, we still feel it is important to report the findings and consider the results. The survey was anonymous. We asked for the details about how Covid-19 has impacted massage therapists in their practice. This report highlights our key findings.

### **SUMMARY**

We saw major divisions in the handling of Covid-19 among the American population. Massage therapists were not immune to the political division, nor the division among the wellness and anti-vaccine crowds versus the pro-science, pro-MRNa technology and pro-protection crowds.

The Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards (FSMTB) provided a set of detailed guidelines for Massage Therapists in relation to Covid-19. ABMP published a comprehensive set of guidelines. Guidelines were also published by cities, counties, states, and federally by the Center for Disease Control. All these guidelines were meant to be advice for massage therapists, businesses, and the public.

Due to mistrust of the government, mistrust of vaccine technology, the speed in which the vaccines were developed and rampant misinformation online, the Covid-19 pandemic has taken its toll on our industry. The disturbing news is that it may not be over yet, considering the high vaccination rates in other countries who are now experiencing major outbreaks due to vaccine-evasive Covid-19 variants.

Some may read this report believing nothing we are being told about Covid-19 is true. Unfortunately, we have no data on how many massage therapists believe that Covid-19 is the greatest global conspiracy of all time versus how many massage therapists believe that Covid-19 is, in fact, the one of the greatest killers of our lifetime.



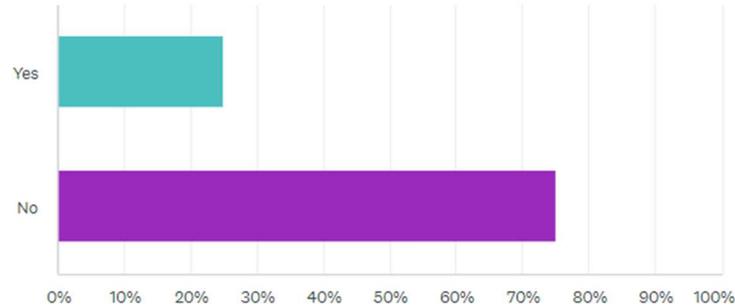
**COVID-19  
KILLER DISEASE  
OR  
VACCINE CONSPIRACY?**

## COVID EXPOSURE

We asked our survey respondents if they had been exposed to Covid-19 since returning to their practices. The majority of respondents answered no, at 75%, while 25% of respondents answered yes.

Since returning to your practice, have you been exposed to Covid-19?

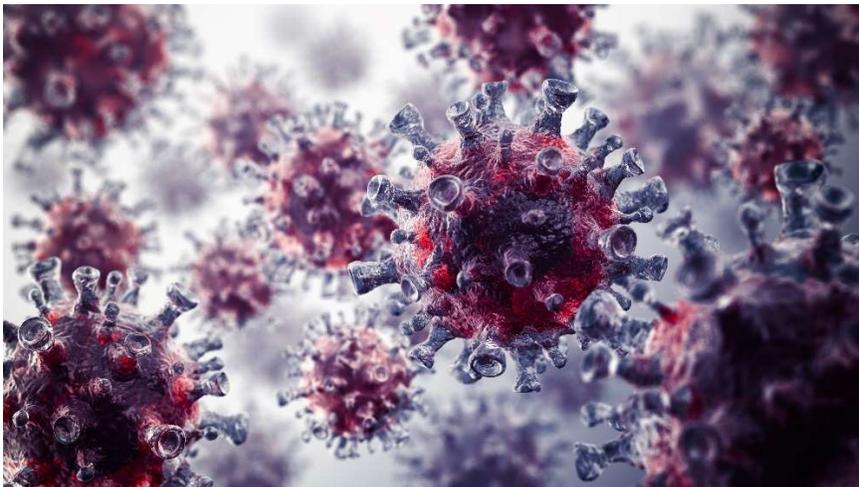
Answered: 12 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	25.00% 3
No	75.00% 9
Total Respondents: 12	

## POSITIVITY AFTER EXPOSURE

Of the two that answered yes to the previous question of Covid-19 exposure after returning to their practice, only one of them answered that they tested positive after their exposure.



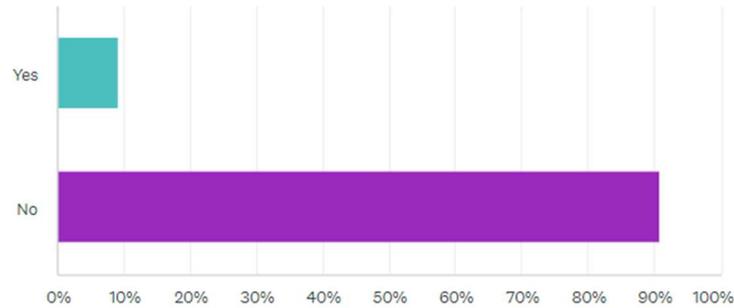
## COVID-19 VIRUS

\*New treatment on the horizon from Pfizer, antiviral pill, Paxlovid, up for FDA Approval soon.

There have been many reported cases of exposure to the virus without becoming ill as a result. Most of this is due to vaccine or post-infection immunity, however, investigations are being done into a very small percentage of people who have been exposed but may have some sort of genetic, natural immunity to the virus.

Have you tested positive for Covid-19 after being exposed?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	9.09% 1
No	90.91% 10
TOTAL	11

### SOLOR OR MULTI-THERAPIST PRACTICE



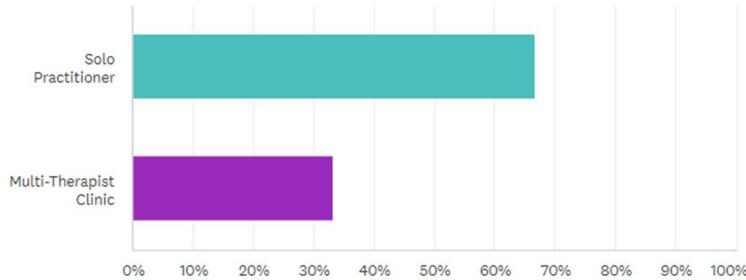
We wanted to know if the therapists who answered our survey were engaged in solo practice or if they were also exposed to other massage therapists, staff, and clients in their work.

It makes sense to say that massage therapists who are engaged in solo practice have less exposure at work, working with only one person at a time, while therapists who comingle with other workers outside the treatment room and in break rooms have a higher risk of contact with Covid-19.

Most of our survey respondents were solo practitioners. Four of our survey respondents work in team environments.

Are you a solo practitioner or do you work in a multi-therapist location?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Solo Practitioner	66.67% 8
▼ Multi-Therapist Clinic	33.33% 4
TOTAL	12

## MASK DATA



We collected mask data in two separate questions. The first was if the massage therapist was wearing a mask and the second was if the client was wearing a mask during treatment. We took this one step further and asked what type of mask the massage therapist was wearing, and what the conditions were of the clients' wearing masks during treatment.

We know that many massage businesses instituted mask rules among employees

but kept masks optional for clients during treatment.

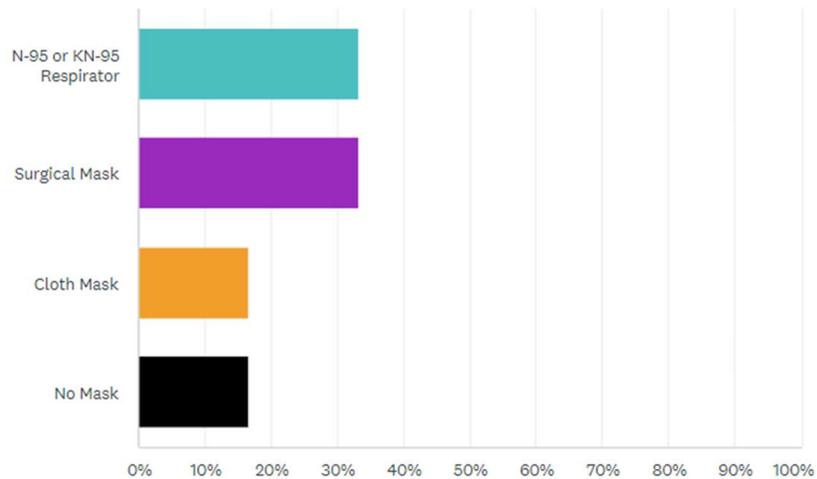
Mask guidelines and mandates have changed rapidly since the pandemic began, leaving many Americans not only skeptical of whether they work, but, also confused and frustrated due to changing rules, regulations, and mandates.

The results below show that 83.33% of our survey respondents wear masks in their practice, while a small minority of 16.67% did not wear masks during the practice of massage therapy with the public.

The type of masks therapists are wearing in the survey are equally split between N-95 or KN-95 respirators and Surgical Masks.

Are you wearing a mask in your practice?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ N-95 or KN-95 Respirator	33.33% 4
▼ Surgical Mask	33.33% 4
▼ Cloth Mask	16.67% 2
▼ No Mask	16.67% 2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>

### CLIENT MASKING

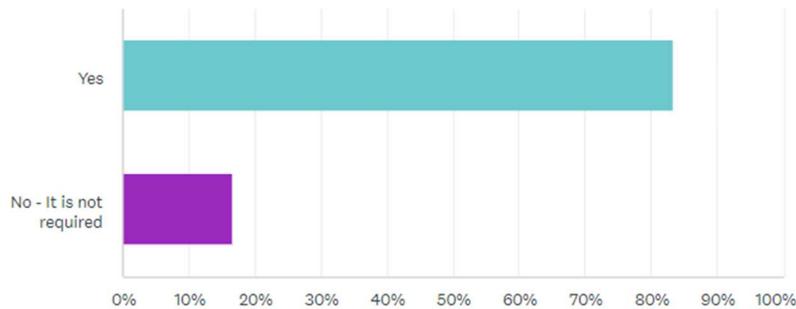
Since we knew that many business owners imposed mask rules on their staff but not on their clients and that massage therapists may take liberties in the treatment room, allowing massage clients to remove masks when face-down, even if mask wearing is required by the business, we wanted more details on the matter.



What we found was that 83.33% of massage therapists who took our survey required clients to wear masks, even in prone position (face down) during their service. Only 16.67% of therapists did not require clients to wear masks.

Are your clients required to wear masks, even in prone position during their service?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	83.33% 10
No - It is not required	16.67% 2
TOTAL	12

## VENTILATION

The 2021 revelation that Covid-19 is an airborne disease, not only spreading in droplet form but also in small-particle aerosols was not a surprise to us, as we were heavily following the Covid-19 research from Europe, Italy mainly, since January of 2020, before lockdowns, and before the disease became a major issue in the United States.

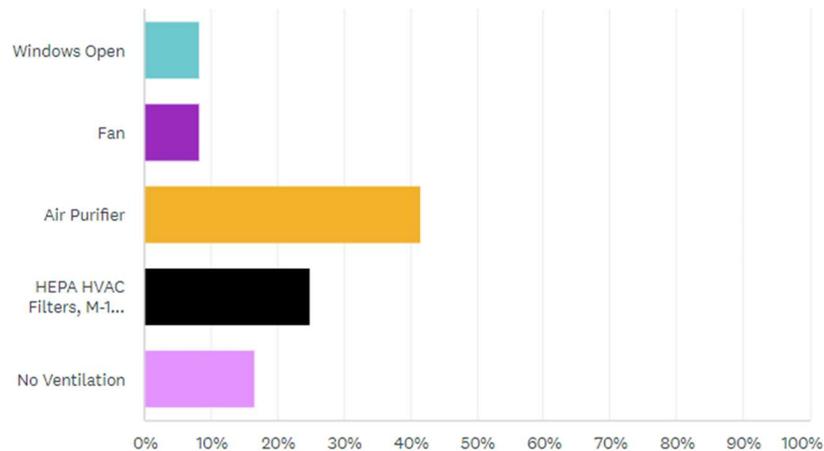


The initial reports from the European nations indicated that Covid-19 was indeed airborne, though, it was not reported to the American population that way by the CDC or government officials initially. It took more than a year for the United States government to confirm airborne transmission.

We asked therapists who took our survey if their room was well ventilated and how the room was being ventilated. The results show that 41.67% of respondents are using air purifiers in the treatment room, and that 25% upgraded their HVAC air filters. Still, 16.67% of these massage therapists' treatment rooms had no ventilation.

### Is your room well ventilated?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Windows Open	8.33% 1
Fan	8.33% 1
Air Purifier	41.67% 5
HEPA HVAC Filters, M-13 Rated or Higher	25.00% 3
No Ventilation	16.67% 2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>

### TIME BETWEEN APPOINTMENTS

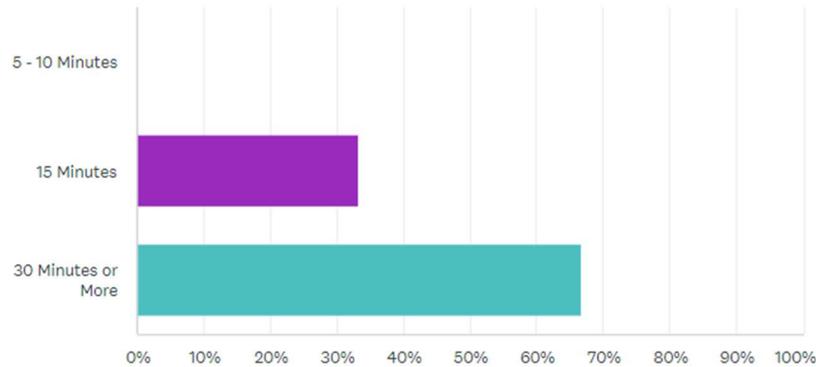
Pre-Covid, most massage employers in the United States only allowed five to ten minutes turnaround time between clients. We also learned from social media discussions in our massage therapists' groups that blankets were not being changed in between clients, that counters and bottles were not being cleaned in between clients, and that the general lack of cleanliness left a lot to be desired pre-pandemic. Therapists in solo practice, from what we gathered, seemed to do more thorough cleaning in-between appointments than in high-volume massage establishments.



We wanted the details of how much time was allotted in between clients for room turnover, cleaning, and disinfecting. Most of our respondents, 66.67% said that 30 minutes or more was allotted, while 33.33% said that 15 minutes was allotted. No respondents said that only 5-10 minutes was allotted for cleaning and disinfecting, a major change from pre-pandemic time frames.

### How much time in between clients?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
5 - 10 Minutes	0.00% 0
15 Minutes	33.33% 4
30 Minutes or More	66.67% 8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>

### CONCLUSION

Based on the results of our survey, and from what we can gather from online conversation, it appears that most massage therapist have taken precautions in their practice since the start of Covid-19.

We gather, however, that a small percentage of our massage therapist population may be affected by the political climate, spread of misinformation, or even religious and conspiratorial indoctrination. Our survey shows that 16.67% of respondents did not wear masks or require clients to wear masks, and that the same percentage of rooms are not ventilated.

Since 2019, Worldometer reports that there have been 256,218,095 coronavirus cases globally, 5,145,014 deaths from Covid-19, and 231,450,915 recoveries, leaving 19,622,166 people currently ill from the virus and transmitting globally as of November 18, 2021.

As of today, the United States reports 48,341,996 total cases, with 54,071 new cases, number two in the world for new cases behind Germany. The death rate in America is still number three in the world at 681 new deaths reported today, only behind Russia and the Ukraine. The US reports the highest number of serious, critical patients today, with 11,550, thousands above the population of India in serious or critical condition.

Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, Minnesota, and Arizona are reporting the five highest new caseloads in the country, while Texas, Pennsylvania, California, Arizona, and North Carolina are reporting the highest new deaths.

While most Americans and the economy seems to be operating close to pre-pandemic levels and most people are abandoning the layers of protections put in place to slow the spread of Covid-19 such as masks and social distancing, the disease is still uncontrolled.

Covid Act Now reports that 69% of the American population has received one or more doses of the Covid-19 vaccine, with the highest vaccinated being Puerto Rico, Massachusetts, Vermont, Connecticut, and Rhode Island, while the lowest vaccinations are reported in Louisiana, West Virginia, Mississippi, Wyoming, and Idaho.

Johns Hopkins University reports that the United States is hovering at a 1.6% mortality rate from the virus, while our neighboring nations of Canada and Mexico are at 1.7% and 7.6% respectively. Case fatalities globally are as high as 19.4% in Yemen, and 9% in Peru, with Mexico reporting the third-highest mortality rate in the world as of November 18, 2021.

Despite the wide availability of vaccines, cases are on the rise again in the United States. Healthline reports that "It is hard to even envision this thing being completely eliminated. Even if the virus itself were to be eliminated, the effects will be seen over the long term for sure. The economic, mental, and physical health effects of Covid-19 have changed the lives of millions of people. The Covid virus will not disappear. We will have to learn how to cope with it as we do influenza. We may need periodic booster doses of the Covid vaccine, but, that interval has yet to be determined."

Thirty states have reported increases in new cases as of the week ending November 7<sup>th</sup>.

WHO reports that globally, Europe is back at the epicenter of the pandemic, while Forbes recently reported that some countries with the world's highest vaccination rates are also battling devastating surges of Covid-19 and the highest death tolls, a worrying trend that has left experts and officials wondering whether successful vaccine drives have lulled governments into easing restrictions too soon and the public into a false sense of security. We don't believe the global pandemic is over. We do believe the fatigue of being in the pandemic for twenty months, coupled with global government mistrust, heated political climates, and restrictions on personal freedoms have caused many Americans to normalize Covid-19 and its devastating effects on our society.