

Massage for the Patients in Intensive Care Units

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Dear Editor,

The recent report, on massage for the patients in intensive care units (ICU) (1) opens a very interesting perspective. Jamaati et al. noted that “having different massage therapists has several unparalleled positive effects on the patients’ clinical conditions and, therefore, it should be recognized as one of the most important clinical considerations for all hospitalized patients (1).” Indeed, touch, including massage, is proved to ensure a psychologic support to the patient. In addition, massage can also be an alternative physical therapy. In naturopathy, massage is an important concept for the management of patients (2). However, for ICU patients, there are several considerations on the use of massage. First, the massage has to be performed by trained and certified practitioners, to avoid unwanted complications. It is very common for the patients in ICU to lack motor response and, therefore, cannot express the reaction to an incorrect massage technique. Also, there are multiple adverse effects, due to massage, such as fracture (3) and myositis (in several

severe cases, myositis ossificans can be encountered (4)). Consequently, it is important to increase awareness of staff to look for these complications in any ICU patient receiving massage therapy.

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