In one study, hand grip endurance in the forearm and hand showed significant improvement after a single massage therapy intervention.

Massage therapy can be helpful for those who need to increase their grip strength.

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Grip strength is involved in a wide variety of activities, including everyday occurrences such as opening a door and carrying a suitcase or handbag, to sports like tennis and basketball. When people lose grip strength, whether because of chronic conditions like arthritis or acute injuries to the hand or wrist, handling mundane tasks or participating in sports can be severely impacted.

Some recent research has shown that massage therapy can be of some help for those who need to increase their grip strength.

The Study
A 2016 study looked at the immediate effects that a single massage could have on both hand grip strength and endurance in 44 healthy men between the ages of 18 to 25. Participants were assigned to either a massage therapy group or passive movement group. The massage protocol included five minutes of deep effleurage and kneading of the dorsal and ventral surfaces of the forearm and hand. Passive movement was performed for the shoulder, elbow, forearm, wrist and fingers, with each joint being moved within its normal limits. Each passive movement was performed five times.

Researchers recorded hand grip endurance and strength using a Jamar hand grip dynamometer, along with a digital chronometer before and after each intervention.

The Results
Researchers found that hand grip endurance in the forearm and hand showed statistically significant improvement after the single massage therapy intervention. No improvement was found in the passive movement group.

They also drew three conclusions from their research: 1) muscles in the hand and forearm received more effective contact because these muscles are small; 2) massage was used for all of the muscles because both intrinsic hand muscles were used as stabilizers and extrinsic forearm muscles were used as flexors and extensors; and 3) the effect of massage on performance may be reduced if there is a time lag between intervention and post-intervention measurements.

According to the authors, future research in hand grip strength should test both the dominant and nondominant hands in both male and female participants, as well as examine the long-term effects on massage and hand grip.

Reference