

REGISTERED MASSAGE THERAPISTS' ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO

# SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLKIT



## #NMTAW NATIONAL MASSAGE THERAPY AWARENESS WEEK

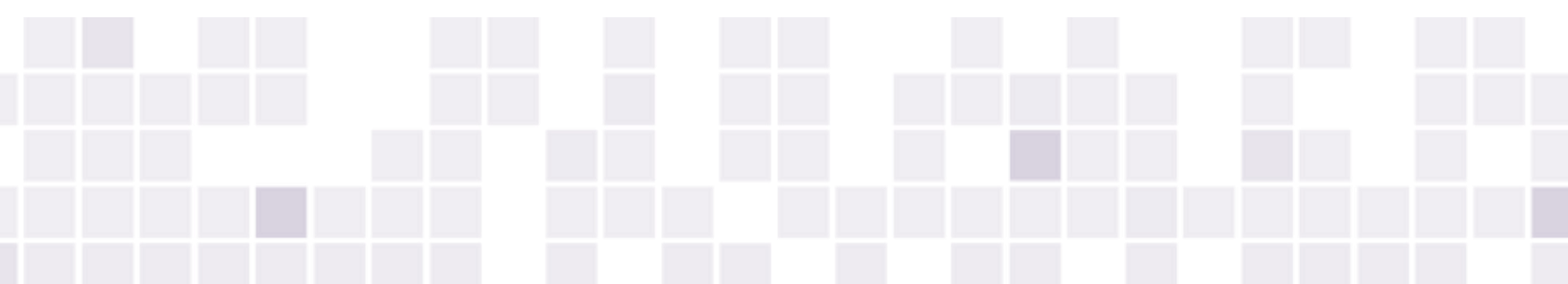
National Massage Therapy Awareness Week was designed to raise awareness of the benefits of massage therapy, and to encourage individuals to seek massage therapy for stress relief, pain management, and general health. National Massage Therapy Awareness Week is an opportunity to talk to your community about the health benefits of massage therapy, and to promote your practice.

### ABOUT THIS TOOLKIT

In this toolkit, you'll find suggested content to post on social media channels to participate in Massage Therapy Awareness Week. You'll also find general social media tips that you can use year round to promote both the benefits of massage therapy and your massage therapy practice. This includes effective use of graphics, tips on interacting on social media with other users including other health practitioners and relevant stakeholder organizations, and general best practices for using social media in your practice.

### @RMTAO

Follow the RMTAO on Facebook or Twitter @RMTAO this Massage Therapy Awareness Week, and we will also be frequently posting content you can share on your own channels to help engage your own audiences.



## The **DO**s and **DON'T**s for RMTs Using Social Media

**DO Keep it Professional** – Social media can be highly publically visible, so be sure to keep your language and post content appropriate for your role as a health professional. This reflects well on yourself as a professional, your practice, and the massage therapy profession.

**DO Adjust your Privacy Settings** – Privacy settings on social media channels are constantly changing, so be sure you know who can see your content. If your social media content is set to public, which includes your patients, make sure to post accordingly. It's a good idea to re-check your privacy settings on each social media channel periodically to be sure that you're aware of who can see what you're posting.

**DO Interact** - While it's important to create and post positive content about your practice and the massage therapy profession as a whole, it's more effective to mix posting your own content with interactions with other social media influencers. A common goal is to have at least 50% of your posts interacting with key influencers.

**DO Post Quality Links** – Posting links on social media sites will often garner more interest, but you need to ensure that the links you're posting are evidence-based, high-quality links that will augment your professional credibility.

**DO Post Frequently** - But not too frequently. If you're only posting once a month, or less, it's likely that your posts will get lost in the shuffle. But post too frequently (multiple times a day), then you might annoy your audience. It can be hard to strike a balance and determine how frequently to post, but based on the responses of your audience, you should be able to figure out the right amount for you.

**DO Track your Metrics** - It doesn't need to include complex charts or graphs, but keeping an eye on how people are responding to your posts on social media can give you great insight into what's working and what isn't.

**DO Jump on the Bandwagons** - If you're noticing that something relevant to massage therapy or to your practice is being posted about frequently on social media, it's a good idea to develop posts on that topic as well. For example, around the holidays, #HappyHolidays might be trending, so if you use that hashtag and post about your holiday hours, it's more likely that your post will be seen.

**DO Stick to your Scope of Practice** - On social media, you are still representing yourself as a Registered Massage Therapist. Don't make claims that are outside of your scope of practice, unless you are clearly identifying that this is not part of your work as an RMT, and be sure to follow the College of Massage Therapists of Ontario (CMTO) regulations.

**DON'T Violate your Patients' Privacy** - Keep patient's personal, health and treatment information private, and avoid sharing specific stories from your practice on social media.

**DON'T Make Unsubstantiated Claims** - Either stick with evidence-based information (and provide the evidence to back up what you say) or if something is your opinion or in your experience, clearly identify it as such. Unsubstantiated claims can be dangerous both for your professional reputation and the health of your patients.



# TERMINOLOGY

When first getting started with social media, it can be difficult to understand what different terms mean, why they're important and how to use them correctly. This guide will go over some useful definitions and provide some helpful tips and tricks to use them effectively in your social media channels.

## FACEBOOK PAGES

For individuals and for personal content, to keep up with friends and family, an individual Facebook profile is likely the best option. However, to promote your business, or even just to promote yourself as an RMT, a Facebook Page is likely the best option. If individuals like your Facebook page, they will get updates of your activities on their timeline. Facebook pages also provide you with helpful statistics to measure your progress, including how many people have viewed your posts, how many people have interacted with your posts and more.

To create a Facebook page visit <https://www.facebook.com/pages/create> and follow the instructions available.

## HASHTAGS

Originally a Twitter term, and later adopted by Facebook, a hashtag is the pound sign (#) followed by a short, memorable word or phrase, with no spaces. A hashtag makes searching social media easier, and can make it more likely to get your content seen.

When searching Twitter for a particular word or phrase, e.g. massage therapy, Twitter will bring up all tweets that use the hashtag #massagetherapy. There is also a list compiled by Twitter of the hashtags that are "trending" in your region, meaning the hashtags that are being used most frequently on any given day.

## RETWEETS / SHARES

Retweets on Twitter, and Shares on Facebook are ways that individuals can distribute the content you've created to their contacts. When posting on social media, one of your goals should be to encourage people to share your content, giving you the opportunity to reach a wider audience.

## NEWSFEEDS

On both Facebook and Twitter when you log in to your account, you will see a series of posts/comments from other people, based on your friends, who you're following, or what you like. This is called your newsfeed. If you show up on the newsfeeds of your patients, or potential patients, it's more likely your promotion will be seen. For your posts to appear in an individual's newsfeed they need to like your page (on Facebook) or follow your account (on Twitter). Alternatively it could be that one of their friends likes or follows your content, and it appears on their newsfeed.

## LIKES

A "like" can mean different things depending on what social media platform you're referring to. On Facebook, when an individual "likes" your company Facebook page, that means they will get updates when you post, and that they can easily follow your content. On Facebook, people can also like individual posts which is one of the many ways to interact with your content. The more "likes" an individual Facebook post has, the more likely it will be seen by others. On Twitter, you can also like individual tweets (tweets are the names of the 140 character posts on Twitter).

## MENTIONS

When you mention an individual on Facebook or Twitter, you are bringing a post to their attention. When mentioning another organization or individual on social media, it is also more likely that their followers will see your posts. To mention an individual, type an @ symbol, followed by their name. For example, if you type @RMTAO, on either Facebook or Twitter, the RMTAO will be notified of your post. Mentions are another great way to track how often people are interacting with you on social media.





## MONITORING YOUR PROGRESS



In order to determine whether the content you are posting is working, and to figure out what content you should post next, it's important to keep track of which of your posts are more successful, and which are less successful. Tracking your progress doesn't have to take long, and can make a real difference in your social media presence.



Facebook pages have something called 'Insights' which provide you with an outline of how you're performing on social media. This

includes how many people have liked your page, how many people have viewed your posts, how many people have engaged with your posts, and how effectively your recent posts have been.

Underneath each post on your Facebook page, you can also see the reach of your post, which means how many individuals have seen your post (counted by whether it appears on an individual's newsfeed). You don't have to check Facebook page insights every day, but insights can identify your most popular posts (posts with the largest reach and most number of interactions)



Twitter also keeps a helpful log of how well each of your tweets are doing. By clicking on the graph icon below any of your tweets,

you can view your impressions (number of people who have viewed your tweet on their Timeline) and total engagements (number of people who have interacted with your tweet), which is further broken down into number of retweets, link clicks, profile clicks and retweets. By clicking on Notifications at the top of your Twitter profile, you can also see whenever anyone new follows you, retweets one of your tweets, likes one of your tweets, or mentions your account.

## DEVELOPING A STRATEGY

Beyond Massage Therapy Awareness Week, for your long-term social media presence, it's important to have a strategy. You should determine what outcomes you're looking to get from social media and develop a plan for how you will achieve your objectives. Do you just want to attract new patients? Do you want to get existing patients to continue to book with you? Do you want existing patients to refer their friends? Or do you have some other goal all together? While thinking of your goals for social media, try to develop SMART goals.

### Specific

Objectives identify what will change in concrete terms, by identifying a particular population that you're targeting, particular tools you'll use and specific actions result from your social media efforts.

### Measurable

Objectives are quantifiable and easy to measure when evaluating your success.

### Attainable

Objectives should be realistic and feasible to attain within the proposed time period, with the resources available.

### Relevant

Objectives and the overall strategy for your practice should align. Ask yourself, does this increased engagement on social media help me grow and maintain a successful practice?

### Timely

Objectives should have concrete deadlines. Ask yourself when it should be accomplished in order to have the maximum impact.

# WHAT TO POST

You may be tempted to fill your social media posts with what appointments you have available, or what special things you can offer your patients. While this is important, on social media it is less effective to simply promote yourself and broadcast your own content. It is much more effective to treat social media like a conversation, and sharing the content of others at least as often as you share your own content. Find some of your peers, other clinics, massage therapy blogs, research, or other organizations relating to massage therapy on social media. By following those types of organizations on social media, and sharing their content, you are in turn making your content more engaging and accessible to your patients, and potential patients.

The foundation of social media is listening and communicating, and there are four simple steps you can follow to make sure what you're communicating is effective.

## KEEP IT SHORT AND SIMPLE

The most effective messages on social media are short, get straight to the point, and use images to enhance their effectiveness. Speak in a way that is conversational, and that will be understood by a wide audience. Your language should be straightforward and avoid technical terms. You want to be inviting people to join the conversation, so your post should be easy to understand and to relate to.

## TAG (ALMOST) EVERYTHING

Building relationships with others through social media will always make your own posts more effective, and tagging shows others that you are talking about a particular topic, person or organizations. By mentioning other organizations, you are both highlighting them and inviting them to connect with you on social media. It's also common to get your likes, shares, follows, mentions, etc. reciprocated, so it might gain you some good social media karma.

## DEVELOP AN ONLINE VOICE THAT SHOWS YOUR PERSONALITY

Be yourself and showcase your personality. Social media is about conversation, and audiences want to feel like there's a real person speaking to them. Don't be too formal. Share entertaining tidbits that your audience can relate to, in the same way you might share those tidbits with a friend. Your voice should be conversational and authentic to get people interested in what you have to say.

## SHARE GOOD CONTENT

They say that a picture is worth 1000 words, and pictures really are more effective in engaging a social media audience. Videos are also more effective, and Facebook actually gives photos and videos more prominence in a user's timeline. Attaching a photo or video to your content will also generate more engagement in the form of likes, shares, comments, etc. When you come across great content in a new story or on a website, share it! Attaching links also makes for more engaging messages.

Practices on social media are constantly evolving – current platforms are updating, and new platforms and tools are being introduced. There are a lot of ways in which you can use social media to help you achieve your goals, whether those goals are gaining new patients, connecting with current patients, connecting with your peers, keeping up-to-date with professional research, or something else entirely. While the specific platform that everyone is using on social media may change, a few things will stay the same. Social media should be about sharing and having conversations, not about broadcasting your thoughts. There will never be a one size fits all approach to social media – your approach should depend on your individual goals and priorities. And finally, being successful on social media takes time, and may involve some trial and error. You won't be an overnight success, but it's important to continuously evaluate and re-evaluate your progress, and adjust accordingly.



# SAMPLE CONTENT

## MESSAGE THERAPY AWARENESS WEEK

Below are some potential posts you can use on Facebook or Twitter. By using the hashtag #NMTAW, you will connect your content to all posts about National Massage Therapy Awareness Week. When individuals search for NMTAW, which is also the hashtag used by the American Massage Therapy Association (AMTA), your posts are more likely to be included in their search results.

The RMTAO will also be sharing posts promoting the benefits of massage therapy during Massage Therapy Awareness Week, so follow us on Facebook and Twitter, @RMTAO, and share our posts on your own channels!

### TWITTER

It's National Massage Therapy Awareness Week! Massage Therapy helps reduce pain and increase function #NMTAW  
<http://ow.ly/Mhvp30577dv>

It's Massage Therapy Awareness Week! Do you experience chronic pain? Massage therapy can help  
<http://ow.ly/2XVW304qWSP> #NMTAW

For Massage therapy awareness week learn how massage therapy can be beneficial during pregnancy and labour #NMTAW  
<http://ow.ly/cs4c303PVnu>

To honour Massage Therapy Awareness Week, watch @MayoClinic physician discuss the benefits to massage therapy #NMTAW <http://ow.ly/BNtL30576Kn>

### FACEBOOK

Massage therapy can help treat a variety of injuries and conditions. This Massage Therapy Awareness Week, check out research, brought to you by the @SamueliInstitute , @AMTAmassage and TheMTFoundation to explore how massage therapy can help people in pain.  
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4925170/>



It's Massage Therapy Awareness Week! Check out this video from the Mayo Clinic's Brent Bauer about the benefits of massage therapy.  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LDkMIZX\\_XVc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LDkMIZX_XVc)

