

Massage Chairs with More Motors are Better: Myth Buster Challenge

There is a massage chair myth that has been permeated through time about the number of motors. This myth claims that the more motors contained in the massage chair, the better the massage chair. At the height of this myth, companies were claiming to have more and more motors in their massage chairs. The thought being that with more motors, the massage is greatly enhanced. Claims were made to have a massage chair with 6, 8 and even 18 motors. Of course, having more motors could enable more varied movements in the shiatsu massage chairs, but is this actually true?

The more motors the better the chair myth is going to be put to the myth buster test. Obviously, having more motors enables more massage options to be possible. Motors are not cheap, in fact they are expensive. Immediately, there is a quality versus quantity tradeoff. Having 18 motors versus 3 motors would make the cost of the 18 motor chair skyrocket, if they use the same quality motor. First concern is the quality level of motors in a massage chair with 18 motors.

Weight is a consideration since motors weigh between 2 lbs to 5 lbs each. Imagine a massage chair with 18 motors, each weighing 5 lbs for a total of 90 lbs just in motors. Motors can quickly add more weight. Space is another important consideration. There is only so much space in a shiatsu massage chair for the motors and the mechanisms driven by the motor. Shiatsu massage chairs with 3 motors in the chair back are already constrained, where do the other 15 motors go?

How is the quality of massage with more or less motors? High end luxury massage chairs generally have 3 high quality motors to power the back massage rollers. There are individual motors to run the kneading massage and to run the tapping massage. The third motor drives the roller unit up and down the chair back. The tapping and kneading motors can be run simultaneously for the shiatsu massage.

If you examine the top of the line massage chairs, most use 1 motor to move the rollers up and down the chair back and 2 motors are used for the kneading and for the tapping. If the design runs each left and right roller independent, then this is done with 5 motors. The motors in this case do not provide any further massage capabilities, but will put less wear and tear on the motors, since their duties are split. Again, neat design, but no real improvement in the actual massage delivered.

There are still massage chair companies that claim to have very high numbers of motors. Certainly, they are not motors performing massage functions. These massage motors are expensive, heavy, take up space and are integral to a long, trouble-free life. Many massage chair companies jumped on this fad and perpetuated the myth. If adding motors does not add massage functions, then what is its value? In this case more is not better. More motors creates more potential problems, complicates the design and servicing. More motors also means the quality level is being sacrificed versus models with less motors. This myth is built on hype. Simple is beautiful!

About the Author

James carries a broad range of [Shiatsu Massage Chairs](#) from Panasonic, Sanyo, Omega and Takasima. James writes articles, [Massage Chairs Reviews](#) and more to help and help find the right chair.

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