

Therapeutic Solutions Newsletter

March / April

Member, Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals

A Cornerstone of Health

Why Now, More Than Ever, You Need a Massage

While you may be tempted to trim your wellness budget when economic times are tough, now more than ever, massage should play a role in reducing stress and strengthening the health of Americans.

When you feel your best, you are more likely to be able to face the challenges difficult times present. With greater health and peace of mind, you can face difficulties with poise, clarity of purpose, and strengthened emotional reserves.

Truly, massage is more than a luxury--it's a vital part of self-care that has a positive ripple effect on us as we work, play, relax, live life, and care for others.

reducing the risk of stress-related illnesses, massage also boosts immunity, helping you fight colds, flu, and other viral infections.

Following is a sampling of a long list of bodywork benefits:

- EASE ANXIETY.
- REDUCE THE FLOW OF STRESS HORMONES.
- IMPROVE SLEEP.
- BOOST THE IMMUNE SYSTEM.
- BUILD ENERGY LEVELS.
- REDUCE FATIGUE.
- FOSTER CONCENTRATION.
- INCREASE CIRCULATION.
- DEVELOP SELF-ESTEEM.
- REDUCE FREQUENCY OF HEADACHES.
- RELEASE ENDORPHINS.

*Tension is who
you think you
should be.*

*Relaxation is
who you are.*

-Chinese Proverb



Massage induces a sense of grounding and calm, helping you face challenges with ease.

Invest In Yourself, Invest in Those You Love

In economically challenging times, it is vital to invest in preventative health care. The last thing you want is to get sick, have to take time off of work, and pay expensive medical bills. Staying healthy means maintaining your ability to take whatever life has to throw at you. Besides lowering stress levels and, in turn,

And if you think about it, massage is an excellent value. The price of massage has remained stable in recent years, as the cost of movies, dining out, and sports events has risen. Which of these has the power to improve your health and your outlook on life?

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The positive effects of regular massage can have far-reaching effects in many areas of your life.

At Home

Massage therapy will also help families under stress create healthier households with clear-thinking and more relaxed moms and dads. Children are very sensitive and often pick up on tension in a household; parents who are taking care of themselves are more likely to be better caregivers and provide a sense of security to their kids. This goes for caregivers of aging parents and other family members.

At Work

The health benefits of massage can help forestall illnesses and lost work time, especially when you may be asked to produce more with fewer resources. Decision-making skills will be better and your performance is likely to be improved with a clear focus and more energy.

A hint for the boss: Research shows employees exhibit less stress and improved performance when given twice-weekly, 15-minute massages in the office!

For Health Conditions

Those with already existing health conditions can continue to reap benefits in the following ways. And proactively caring for health through massage may help reduce costly doctor visits and use of prescription and over-the-counter medications.

Research shows:

- Massage can reduce sports-related soreness and improve circulation--good to know when you may be exercising more to reduce stress.

- Deep-tissue massage is effective in treating back pain, arthritis, osteoarthritis and fibromyalgia. Fibromyalgia patients receiving massage also have less pain, depression, anxiety, stiffness, fatigue, and sleep problems.

- Massage reduces symptoms of carpal tunnel syndrome.

- Oncology patients show less pain, fatigue, nausea, anxiety and depression following massage therapy.

- Stroke patients show less anxiety and lower blood pressure with massage therapy.

- Massage therapy is effective in reducing postsurgical pain.

- Alzheimer's patients exhibit reduced pacing, irritability and restlessness after neck and shoulder massage.

- Labor pain. Massage during labor appears to reduce stress and anxiety, relax muscles and help block pain. Some medical professionals believe massage also reduces tearing, shortens labor, reduces the need for medication and shortens hospital stays.

- Preterm babies receiving massage therapy gain more weight and have shorter hospital stays than infants not receiving massage.

- Massage is beneficial in reducing symptoms associated with arthritis, asthma, high blood pressure, and premenstrual syndrome.

There is now a body of research to support the benefits listed above. But there's no greater testimonial than the person who is a regular receiver of massage. The first-hand experience of bodywork clients largely echo the same sentiment: bodywork enhances quality of life, and the return on your investment is great.

While bodywork feels like a luxurious mini-vacation, and you should by all means enjoy it, there is an actual physical need for massage. Maintaining a regular massage schedule will help you operate at your peak level--whether it be at work, at home, or at play. Invest in yourself, and book a massage today.



Massage is one of the few things that provide so much pleasure while improving your health.

Lavender

An Essential Oil for Fundamental Health

Laurie Chance Smith

Lavender essential oil is a one-stop medicine chest, helping to reduce anxiety, fatigue, and stress and balance hormones, increase the immune response, lower blood pressure, and relieve pain. To utilize lavender's healing benefits at home, mix five to 10 drops of lavender essential oil in one ounce of jojoba oil or unscented lotion. (Essential oils shouldn't be applied directly to the skin; it's best to partner them with a carrier oil, liquid, or lotion.)

EARACHES

For earaches, dab one drop of lavender massage oil behind the ear and rub gently. Alternatively, place one drop of lavender oil on a cotton ball and carefully place inside the outer ear.

HEADACHES

Inhaling lavender is also effective for headache relief. Add a few drops to a bowl of warm water and breathe. Gently rub lavender massage lotion on the temples, forehead, and base of the neck.

COLDS

Lavender oil can also help break up coughs and clear sinuses. Colorado-based holistic aromatherapist Nicola McGill suggests the regular home-use of antiseptic essential oils such as lavender to help avoid colds and other infectious diseases. Add a few drops to a vaporizer to help clear colds and infuse the home with lavender's scent.

STRESS

At night, six to eight drops of lavender added to a warm bath helps melt away stress and relieve fatigue. Blend a footbath by adding three drops of lavender to a bowl of warm water, sink your feet in, and relax. For help inducing sleep, add two or three drops of lavender essential oil to the underside corner of your pillow.

TRANQUIL AROMA

A human takes 23,040 breaths a day, and each inhale floods the system with scent. Rely on lavender's tranquil aroma to clear the way toward peaceful days.



Lavender is loaded with wellness properties.

The Scoop on Sugar

Not Such a Sweet Story

Shelley Burns, N.D.

Most people have no idea just how much sugar is in the foods Americans consume. However, this sweet culprit may be behind many health issues, including skin problems. Here's why.

When refined carbohydrates, otherwise known as simple sugars, are consumed in excess, they cause an increase in blood sugar levels. This excess sugar (glucose) attaches itself to proteins and is referred to as glycosylation. All cells in our bodies have a protein component to them including our hormones, enzymes, cholesterol, and immune cells. As proteins become coated with glucose, they are unable to work effectively.

Collagen, that vital component of a glowing complexion, makes up 40

percent of the proteins in the body. Glycosylation hastens protein cross-linking, which weakens collagen. The result: wrinkles.

But wait, there's more. Sugar also causes an increase in levels of cortisol, the stress hormone, which can interfere with hormonal balance and increase inflammation. Skin inflammation can manifest as acne, puffiness under the eyes, and eczema. Sugar also increases insulin levels and reduces sensitivity of insulin. In fact, research shows people with acne process sugar poorly, which could be a direct result of high cortisol and high insulin levels in the blood.

And finally, sugar depletes the necessary nutrients required to keep the immune

system healthy. For example, sugar interferes with the way the body uses vitamin C, which is needed for the formation of collagen and elastin as well as immunity. It can also lead to sluggish digestion, which also affects the skin.

The best way to steer clear of sugar is to read labels. Avoid products that list sugar in the first three ingredients, and be aware of words ending in "ose" such as sucrose, dextrose, and maltose, all of which are sugar indicators. Also avoid processed foods and refined carbohydrates, such as white flour, white rice, and white potatoes.

Whenever the sweet allure of sugar tempts you, remember, sugar-free is key to beauty.

Sometimes the most important thing in a whole day is the rest we take between two deep breaths.

-Etty Hillesum

"Massage has survived and continues to evolve because it is the most fundamental means of giving care, affection and aid between human beings. Its healing qualities differ from those of other modalities because massage confers its benefits through the character and healing intention of those who give and receive it. The true value of massage comes from the intrinsic, inherent need of humans to have contact with one another."

From AMTA Florida Journal (Summer 2008 #46,)

Ready to take advantage of all the wonderful therapeutic and stress relieving benefits of massage therapy but not sure where to begin? You're in the right place! Whether you're scheduling your first appointment, or already a client, a more energetic and pain free lifestyle is just a click away.

Visit our web sites or **BOOK AN APPOINTMENT ONLINE**

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