



Top 5 Reasons Your Body Needs Massage

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Stress Relief

Therapeutic massage helps restore balance by triggering the “relaxation response” your body needs. Massage can also relieve many mental and physical problems and issues caused by prolonged stress.

Relaxation Response

The Relaxation Response is the opposite of stress response. It returns your body to normal functionality. The endocrine & autonomic nervous systems activate changes in the body. These changes result in “signs of relief”.

Signs of Relief

Signs of relief include a slower heart rate allowing for deeper breathing, relaxed muscles, and improved circulation and digestion. Certain massage techniques, such as long smooth effleurage movements, are known to trigger these benefits.

Chronic Stress

Chronic Stress often leads to chronic muscular tension, trigger points and poor circulation. These issues respond well to massage and allow the body to function at a higher level. Swedish massage, deep tissue, and trigger points are all especially beneficial. These techniques promote physical relief.

Massage can also help with mental relief and daily stresses. Having a massage can be like taking a vacation from the challenges that life often bring to us. During massage you give yourself permission to create peace and tranquility. Studies have confirmed massage reduces anxiety levels and increases feelings of well-being.

Homeostasis

Finally, let’s not forget the pleasure and sense of homeostasis during and after the massage. The benefits of therapeutic touch have been highly praised in studies from pre-mature babies to aging adults. Therapeutic massage contributes to healthy immune system functioning and well-being.

Muscle Recovery:

Therapeutic massage helps the body recover from stress of exercise. It also facilitates the rebuilding of the muscles after exercise. The physiological benefits of massage are improved blood and lymph circulations, muscle and general circulation. This in turn helps with the removal of waste products and cell nutrition.

This promotes normalization and greater elasticity, deactivation of trigger points, and faster healing of injuries. This all adds up to relief from soreness and stiffness, better flexibility, and less potential for future injuries. In addition to general recovery, massage may also focus on specific muscles used in a specific sport or fitness activity.

Some of the specific areas of greater stress sports massage would work on muscles stressed by those sports. Some examples, are for runners and dancers – legs would be the main focus. For a sport like swimming, we target the upper body, and tennis players – the arms might be the focus.

Recovery is an important part of the any physical activity especially strenuous exercise. Recovery is also a major factor for avoiding over training syndrome. Over training is characterized by apathy, irritability, altered appetite and increase in frequent injury. Which might in turn lead to increased resting heart rates and insomnia. This happens when the body is not allowed to recover. Therapeutic massage helps you avoid over training and facilitates recovery through relaxation and other physiological effects.

You may have specific trouble spots due to old injuries, accidents or life situations that could be helped with massage. Your massage therapist can pay special attention to those areas, and monitor them for developing problems to help keep them in good condition. An experienced massage therapist can also coordinate treatments and complement care received from other health care professionals.

Improved Circulation

One of the best things, proven time after time in studies, is that massage helps improve circulation. What does that mean? Most of the functions of your body that are systematically circular to keep you healthy is helped by massage. Massage improves circulation of the lymph system, digestive system, respiratory systems and more.

Massage helps blood circulation by dramatically increasing the rate of blood flow. It also stimulates the nerve receptors that cause the blood vessels to dilate (open). Oxygen content in the blood can increase as much as 15%.

Massage increases lymph circulation by helping move impurities and waste fluids away from the body's tissues to the lymph nodes to get filtered. While blood flow is controlled by the heart, the lymph movement depends largely on the squeezing effects of muscle contractions. Inactive or immobile people fail to stimulate the circulation of the lymphatic system, while very active people can create more waste than the body can remove on its own. Therapeutic massage can dramatically aid in either of these situations.

If you are having problems with constipation or other digestive issues - massage for the abdomen helps with a dual action approach to support digestion. Digestion problems can be a result of stress or lack of moisture or other physical conditions. First, massage will relieve stress which encourages healthy intestinal functions. Massage will also stimulate the muscles

and organs required to produce the function of the intestines that aid with moving your bowels.

Respiratory issues such as congestion, labored breathing, restricted respiration and coughing can also be helped. Massage can release tension in the various muscles that that are used in breathing and make you breath easier. Massage can help with strained breathing by relaxing tense muscles and improving breathing patterns by conserving energy and reducing the fatigue that over taxes your body which in turn labors your breathing. Coughs can be helped to become productive with techniques such as percussion, which loosens mucus.

Immune Function

There is a growing body of research that indicates massage therapy can boost your immune system. People looking to fend off a cold and/or flu during the winter months can seek out a massage therapist for preventive strategies. Regular massage has been shown to make the immune system stronger!

Researchers working with patients with compromised systems have found massage therapy can improve immune system functions, those same benefits can translate to people fighting off the flu, the common cold, and other seasonal illnesses.

Massage therapy increases the activity level of the body's white blood cells. These are the cells that work to combat viruses attacking your body. According to a research from Cedar-Sinai hospital, participants in relaxation massage experienced a significant change in lymphocytes that play a large role in defending the body from disease. When the body is stressed the immune system is compromised. The ability to take time for yourself and get a massage makes is easier on your immune system.

Prenatal, Postpartum and Infant Massage

During pregnancy, the volume of a woman's body doubles and massage helps with circulation. A woman's body during pregnancy goes through many changes and some of these changes create uncomfortable conditions. Massage provides relief through the positive physiological effects of soft tissue manipulation.

The overall goals for prenatal massage are to minimize stress, promote relaxation, alleviate pain, and prepare muscles for child birth. In addition, there are specific techniques and movements which are designed to help particular issues and conditions such as: low back pain, edema, headaches, cramps, insomnia, and sinus congestion, just to name a few.



Massage improves pregnancy by manipulation of soft tissue, such as kneading and stretching of muscles, tendons, ligaments and more. One of the major physiological benefits is an increase of blood circulation to the areas and muscles being massaged. The increased circulation results in more oxygen and nutrients being available to the involved tissues. As a result, there is an increase in joint flexibility, decreases muscle tension, improved muscle pliability, and a calming of nervous irritability.

After the baby is born, don't forget massage recover from birthing. After the birth of the baby, both mom and baby can benefit from massage. Postpartum massage helps restore your muscles back to a healthier and more normal status. It can help with relaxation and stress reduction. Massage can also improve sleep and breast feeding and there are specific techniques the help restore the mother's body back to pre-pregnancy conditions, and can even help speed healing and assist with C-section recovery!

Finally, massage therapists can teach the parent and or family infant massage. Massage can be a bonding experience for everybody. Some of the benefits of infant massage are the same as general benefits for kids and adults. However, infant massage has some added benefits as well, such as improved overall functioning of the gastrointestinal tract. It helps babies learn sensory and body awareness. It promotes relaxation which helps babies self soothe and remain calm, reducing crying. It helps with congestion, gas and colic and also stimulates all physiological systems.

