

Treat Yourself Right - Articles for Wellness

Sept./Oct. 2011 | Member, Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals

Invest in Your Health

Massage Offers Excellent Return on Investment

"Invest for the long term" is great financial advice, but it's also great healthcare advice. Never is investing for the long term more important than when you are making day-to-day decisions about your health. There are short-term gains from taking care of your health, to be sure, but the long-term benefits are not to be underestimated.

You already know the value of bodywork. For all the short-term stress and pain relief you get from massage today, there are lasting rewards you'll thank yourself for down the road. Massage therapy as a preventive measure and part of an ongoing care regimen can mean fewer visits to the doctor, as well as fewer

emotionally and spiritually, and maintain harmonious relationships with coworkers, family, and friends.

Research supports the value of massage. Massage provides many benefits, including improved concentration, energy, circulation, and self-esteem, as well as reduced stress, fatigue, and pain. It's helpful with more acute health conditions, also. If you, or a loved one, are already dealing with a health condition, massage is an even more important part of your healthcare planning.

Research shows:

- Alzheimer's patients exhibit reduced irritability, pacing, and restlessness after



Massage in a health investment, helping to manage stress, support wellness, and boost immunity.

co-pays, prescriptions, and over-the-counter medications. Ultimately, it means a healthier and happier you.

An Excellent Value

As you plan the family budget, ponder how massage therapy impacts your ability to make good decisions, cope with extra responsibilities, stay on an even keel

neck and shoulder massage.

-- Deep-tissue massage is effective in treating arthritis, back pain, fibromyalgia, and osteoarthritis.

-- Fibromyalgia patients receiving massage have fewer sleep problems and less anxiety, depression, fatigue, pain, and stiffness.

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Life is like a mirror. Smile at it and it smiles back at you.

-Peace Pilgrim

Office Hours and Contact

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In this Issue

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-- Massage during labor appears to help block pain, reduce stress and anxiety, and relax muscles. Some medical professionals say massage shortens labor.

-- Massage can reduce sports-related soreness and improve circulation, and is beneficial in reducing symptoms associated with arthritis, asthma, burns, high blood pressure, and premenstrual syndrome.

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

-- Preterm babies receiving massage therapy gain more weight and have shorter hospital stays.

-- Massage therapy is effective in reducing post-surgical pain and can even reduce the time required for post-operative hospital stays.

You may be trimming some extras out of your budget, as many Americans are. When weighing what goes and what stays, consider what an excellent value massage is, especially in relation to things that may be less valuable, but still cost you plenty. The price of massage has remained stable in recent years, while the cost of movies, dining out, and sports events have risen. Which of these activities has the power to improve your health and which has a better return on investment?

Get Creative

There are many ways to keep massage in your life if you use your imagination. While vacations are definitely needed right now by just about everybody, more and more Americans are staying closer to home and taking "staycations." How about planning a healthy, home-based vacation and including massage as part of your relaxation?

When it comes to gift-giving occasions, why not give and ask for massage gift certificates? Massage makes a wonderful replacement for flowers that wilt, sweaters that don't fit, or another box of fattening candy. Some folks buy spa packages or put together their own outings with a massage, a museum excursion, or lunch at a favorite restaurant. Mothers, daughters, aunts, and grandmothers are enjoying spas together and massage is a key part of the package. These events create bonding experiences that launch new traditions and reinforce a healthy lifestyle.

Gift certificates for chair massage at airports are an option for weary travelers, as is chair massage at malls for package-laden shoppers. If you are an employer, consider gifting your staff with on-site chair massage, which has been shown to reduce stress and improve performance. Just think of it as the ultimate pat on the back for staff and one that pays you back.

Maintain Well-Being

You may be tempted to trim your wellness budget when economic times are tough. Yet, a recent national consumer survey showed most massage-minded Americans are still committed to maintaining the health benefits they experience with massage. It only makes sense. The better you feel, the better job you can do of caring for yourself and your loved ones. Massage therapy will also help families under stress create healthier households, and

more focused and relaxed moms and dads. Children are sensitive and often pick up on tension in a household; parents who are taking care of themselves are more likely to provide a sense of calm to their kids. This goes for caregivers of aging parents, too.

Now, more than ever, massage should play a role in reducing your stress and strengthening your health. When people feel their best, they are more 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 you as you work, play, and care for others. Investing in your health is one investment that's sure to pay off.



The value of bodywork runs deep, for nothing is more valuable than good health.

Massage and Cancer

A Viable Option?

There's no doubt that cancer patients can benefit from massage therapy. In fact, bodywork can serve as a nurturing healthcare option during the stressful, doctor appointment-ridden time of oncology management.

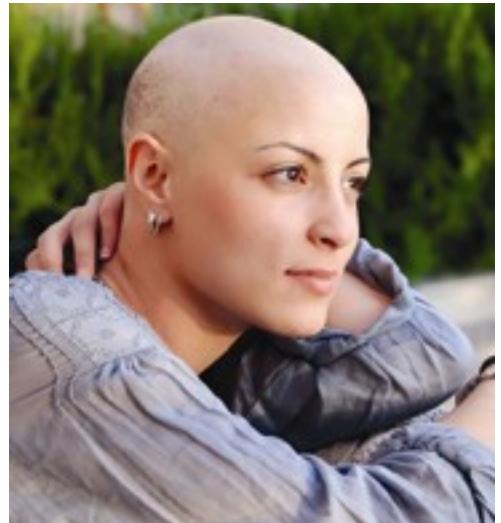
"Cancer treatment places a heavy toxin load on the body, which massage can help eliminate," says Gayle MacDonald, author of *Medicine Hands: Massage Therapy for People with Cancer*. "However, too much too fast may be more than the client's body can comfortably handle. Skilled touch is beneficial at nearly every stage of the cancer experience, during hospitalization, the pre- or post-operative period, in the out-patient clinic, during chemotherapy and radiation, recovery at home, remission or cure, and in the end stage of life."

The benefits of massage for these clients include improved blood circulation, equalized blood pressure, and help with fatigue and nausea. The place to start is by consulting with your physician and

your massage therapist. For those who are two to three months out from treatment, bodywork that can be used includes lymph drainage therapies, trigger point therapy, neuromuscular therapy, myotherapy and myofascial release, among others. It's better to wait before receiving deeper work.

While hospitalized, some appropriate techniques include cranialsacral therapy, polarity therapy, reiki and Therapeutic Touch. MacDonald says no matter how severe the treatment's side effects, there's always a way to administer some type of bodywork. According to massage therapist and former oncology nurse Cheryl Chapman, while it's important to receive touch from a qualified practitioner who has worked with cancer patients before, "Touch is always appropriate--there isn't anyone who is untouchable."

If you or someone you love is battling cancer, consider massage as a therapeutic, nurturing choice to help navigate this difficult journey.



Bodywork offers nurturing relaxation.

Massage for Old Injuries

Ancient Injuries Don't Have to Make You Feel Old

Art Riggs

Injuries such as chronic back pain, trick knees, and sticky shoulders are not necessarily something you just have to live with. Massage techniques might hold the key to unlocking this old pain.

Will Massage Help?

The benefits of massage will depend on the extent of the injury, how long ago it occurred, and on the skill of the therapist. Chronic and old injuries often require deeper and more precise treatments with less emphasis on general relaxation and working on the whole body. Massage works best for soft tissue injuries to muscles and tendons and is most effective in releasing adhesions and lengthening muscles that have shortened due to compensatory reactions to the injury. Tight and fibrous muscles not

only hurt at the muscle or its tendon, but can also interfere with proper joint movement and cause pain far away from the original injury.

Therapists who perform such work often have specialized names for their work--such as orthopedic massage, neuromuscular therapy, myofascial release, medical massage, etc.,--but many massage therapists utilize an eclectic approach combining the best of the specialties.

It Works!

A recent Consumer Reports article ran the results of a survey of thousands of its readers and reported that massage was equal to chiropractic care in many areas, including back and neck pain. Massage

also ranked significantly higher than some other forms of treatment, such as physical therapy or drugs.

If that nagging injury persists, consider booking a massage. Be sure to discuss the injury with your practitioner: How did you receive the injury? Have you reinjured it? And what exactly are your symptoms? Often, the body compensates in one area to protect another that has been traumatized, and this can create new problems.

Discuss the issues with your massage therapist. (Sometimes just talking about old injuries can play a significant role in the healing process.) Together, the two of you can work to determine a treatment plan.

*Be content to
stand in the
light, and let the
shadow fall
where it will.*

-Mary W. Stewart

RATES

30 min	\$40
45 min	\$50
60 min	\$75
90 min	\$95

SPECIAL RATES & PACKAGE DEALS

1 hr 20 min \$80

Buy any 3 massages and get the 4th massage 1/2 off

Give 3 referrals and receive a free massage

Senior discount available

Come try a sample of Joseph's work with a chair massage on Mondays from 3-7pm at the Greenstar Co-op located at 701 W. Buffalo Street in Ithaca. Or make an appointment to visit Joseph at his studio at 108 W. Buffalo Street, 2nd Floor, in Ithaca.

Call today to book your massage. 607-379-1639

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