

2006 Holiday Newsletter
BABY BOOMERS SHAPING HEALTHCARE & WELLNESS
Linda Penkala C.M.T.

Sharing my Holiday newsletter this year to best serve both massage companies' clients & organizations seemed like a perfect and timely fit. This compelling research and info was in September's Benefit and Compensation Digest ([click here](#)) written by George DeVries titled, "Using Complementary & Alternative Medicine Insurance (CAM) to Contain Healthcare Costs."

Instrumental in this growing national interest in CAM therapies are the baby boomers that have been challenging the system for 5 decades seeking a holistic approach toward wellness and health. Willing to pay 27 billion out of pocket for chiropractic, massage and acupuncture translates to an estimated 48%-62% of Americans using one of the above treatment choices. These numbers experts say will increase as concerns with mainstream medicine proliferate in regard to medical errors and prescription drugs' questionable effectiveness. According to JAMA (Journal of the American Medical Association), CAM therapies – acupuncture, chiropractic, and massage are gaining acceptance in health plans. In the year 1997 - 629 million Americans chose CAM therapies as compared to 385 million choosing traditional medical care.

The bodies of research are affirming the above numbers and the reasons why they are growing. The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention provide the validity in claims for pain relief from acupuncture for osteoarthritis. The Touch Research Institute at the University of Miami discovered that a 15-minute chair massage weekly resulted in decreased job stress and significant increase in productivity. The Society for Human Resource management states that 18% of large employers offer massage therapy as employee benefits. Forward thinking organizations are seeing that 40% of job turnover is related to stress, costs more than \$300 billion per year and choose to be proactive in employee wellness. As companies are seeing this shift, they are offering CAM as a cost-containment strategy to help lessen the factors that increase employer health care costs.

A new service I will be offering as it relates to the above will be a seminar (or series) to companies, groups and organizations educating all as to healthier options for pain and depression. The staggering absenteeism, cost to companies and lost productivity as a result of these 2 chronic symptoms challenge us all to think differently. Offering natural and less toxic alternatives from essential oils provide employees an immediate and effective remedy. Teaching regular seminars in Laurel on the 2nd Fri. of the month to the community reminded me to share this with the corporate realm as well.

Thank-you for welcoming to Corporate Pit Stop this year a new colleague Rene Rodriguez, CMT and to Optimum Health for Life - working on Saturdays - Chris Roberts, CMT. It is always a pleasure working with top-notch professionals who have a caring heart and passion for massage therapy as they all do: Cheryl, Tamara, Chelle, Virginia, and Kathy. I am grateful and so appreciate their travel, time, and dedication.

A huge hug of thanks this year for your referrals and gift certificates whether corporate or individual to graciously share this marvelous gift of touch. I wish for you a winter of deep inner growth and healing & a New Year of reaching for the possibilities.

*May God Bless You -
Linda Penkala*

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