

OHL 2010 Holiday Newsletter

Winter 2010

Member, Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals

Age is a State of Mind

Baby Boomers Combat Aging with Bodywork

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, preventing disease and injury is critical to reducing the expected growth of health-care costs headed our way, as more than 70 million U.S. baby boomers cross the 60-year-old threshold. Moreover, disease prevention is critical to, well, your health!

Whether you're a boomer who is running a marathon or running after your grandchildren, you know that growing older doesn't mean growing old. If you're wondering how to stave off the effects of aging, the preventative and restorative nature of massage and bodywork might be just what the body ordered.

and its elasticity, and toning muscle tissue. Massage also creates a stimulating cellular function in the hypodermis, dermis, and epidermis layers of the skin and increases the production of skin-nurturing sebum.

Immunity and Stress

If you're already a frequent recipient of massage, you know what the work does to combat daily stress. But did you know how detrimental those stressors can be?

Experts say the majority of disease we encounter today is associated with stress. Not only that, stress is a huge factor in premature aging of the body. Researchers say chronic stress ages the

*Nothing great
was ever
achieved
without
enthusiasm*

-Ralph W. Emerson



Massage therapy can play an important role in aging well and remaining youthful and healthy.

Improved Circulation, Healthier Skin

As our bodies age, our circulation slows and our skin loses its once youthful vitality. Experts say the mechanical nature of massage combats these effects by increasing circulation through the manipulation of tissue, improving the appearance and condition of the skin

body, weakens immune cell function, and can make cells appear up to 17 years older than they really are. Through its effects, massage deftly attacks stress, while boosting the immune system.

Massage encourages the release of oxytocin, a stress-reducing hormone in the body most often associated with

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Office Hours and Contact

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birth and bonding, and activates the parasympathetic nervous system and its relaxation response. Massage also decreases beta brainwave activity, increases dopamine and serotonin levels in the body, and reduces cortisol levels, all of which are linked to decreased stress.

Squashing the Pain

Part of the aging process, unfortunately, involves dealing with aches and pains. You might find a day of gardening brings on back pain you never experienced before, or your biking regimen now requires greater recovery time afterward. Even though pain is a constant source of grief for an aging body, massage can make a difference.

The passive movement in massage keeps joints more mobile and stimulates the synovial fluid, which lubricates the joints and nourishes the articular cartilage. Massage also prompts the release of endorphins and other pain-reducing neurochemicals.

In addition to the pains of physical exertion an aging body experiences, the discomfort caused by arthritis can be just as debilitating. Experts predict that one-third of Americans will get arthritis as they age. Ironically, most arthritis sufferers may not think of massage when they start to explore which therapies might ease their pain. While it is doubtful an arthritic joint can "heal" completely with massage, it can feel better. And for an arthritis sufferer, better is a welcome word, particularly when there are no side effects involved.

According to the Arthritis Foundation, an increasing number of doctors are recommending massage to their arthritis patients to help relieve the pain and stiffness caused by their disease. Massage can increase circulation around painful joints, bringing healing oxygen and nutrients, including amino acids, to rebuild tissue. Many massage therapists report that their arthritic clients find better and longer-lasting relief from massage than from pharmaceuticals.

Whether its reducing the symptoms of arthritis, or simply addressing the aches and pains of living an active life, massage can play an important role in aging well.

Bennies for Boomers

The benefits from massage and bodywork can help bodies of all ages, especially for baby boomers. Research has shown that massage:

- Improves range of motion and decreases low-back pain.
- Increases circulation, allowing the body to pump more oxygen and nutrients into tissues and vital organs.
- Provides exercise and stretching for atrophied muscles.
- Reduces swelling and scar tissue.
- Reduces recovery time from injury/surgery.
- Reduces stress, a major contributor to disease and ill health.
- Releases endorphins, the body's natural painkiller, thereby reducing the need for medications.
- Stimulates lymph flow and supports the body's natural process of detoxification.

Psychological Value

In addition to all the physical benefits massage and bodywork offers, there also are proven psychological changes we experience with massage. One of the reasons massage feels so relaxing is that there is a literal psychological benefit as dopamine and serotonin become balanced in the system. And when massage produces oxytocin in the body, there is a sense of being nurtured. Add that to the restorative effect that comes from those quiet moments during massage, and you've got a process that experts say is incredibly healing.

Aging, obviously, is a process none of us can avoid. As Benjamin Franklin said, "When you're finished changing, you're finished." Turn the inevitability of aging into a positive process of change and let massage and bodywork help you along the journey.



The aches and pains that often accompany the aging process can be managed with bodywork.

The Art of Bathing

Simple Recipes to Soothe Mind and Body

From bubble baths to essential oils to Dead Sea salts, prepared bath products are designed to enhance a bathing experience, but they can be expensive. Instead of spending the extra money on special bath products, try one of these natural, simple bath recipes with ingredients you probably already have in your cupboard or refrigerator.

Epsom Salts

ADD 2 CUPS EPSOM SALTS TO BATH WATER.

Magnesium sulfate, or Epsom salts, has been used for centuries as a folk remedy, and research now confirms its numerous benefits. The second most abundant element in human cells and a crucial component for bone health, magnesium is also needed for muscle control, energy production, and the elimination of toxins. Magnesium eases stress, aids sleep, and improves concentration while reducing inflammation, joint pain, and muscle cramps. Sulfates help to flush toxins from the body, prevent or reduce headaches, and even improve brain function.

Most American diets are deficient in magnesium. However, one of the best ways to boost dietary intake is by bathing in Epsom salts, which are readily absorbed through the skin.

Milk

ADD 2-4 CUPS MILK OR BUTTERMILK TO BATH WATER.

Rich in calcium, protein, and vitamins, milk replenishes the skin, while lactic acid found in milk acts as a natural exfoliant. A member of the alpha hydroxy acid family, lactic acid breaks the glue-like bonds between the outer layer of dead skin cells. Soak in a milk bath for 20 minutes, then gently scrub skin with a loofah or washcloth.

Honey

ADD 1/4 CUP HONEY TO BATH WATER.

A fragrant, natural humectant, honey helps skin attract and retain moisture. Its antibacterial and anti-irritant properties make it an ideal cleansing and soothing additive to a warm bath.



Turn your home bath into a spa experience.

The Art of Aromatherapy

Essential Oils Provide Healing and Balance

Aromatic essential oils extracted from herbs, flowers, resin, wood and roots have long been a source of healing since ancient times, aiding in relaxation, circulation and wound healing. However, the use of these medicinal oils declined as the modern pharmaceutical industry developed. In 1928, French chemist Rene Maurice Gattefosse revived the use of essential oils and developed the art and science of utilizing naturally extracted aromatic essences from botanicals to balance and harmonize the health of body, mind and spirit. Gattefosse coined the practice aromatherapy.

Because aromatherapy's affect on emotional health, many massage therapists and bodywork practitioners

incorporate this noninvasive treatment into their practices. Dispensers or diffusers filled with aromatic essences may be used to scent the massage room, and specific essential oils are used on the client's skin during the massage. Because each oil has unique characteristics and benefits, the choice of oil or oils can be customized to the client's needs and emotional state. Whether inhaled or applied topically, aromatherapy requires an understanding of how each essential oil interacts with the body, as well as the mind.

Many pure essential oils need to be diluted, as they can cause irritation when applied directly to the skin. To guarantee safe and correct usage, consult a trained herbalist or practitioner.

The emotions listed below can be gently eased by one or a combination of the following essential oils:

Anxiety: bergamot, cedarwood, clary sage, frankincense, lavender, patchouli, Roman chamomile, rose, sandalwood.

Fatigue, Burnout: basil, ginger, grapefruit, jasmine, lemon, peppermint, rosemary, sandalwood.

Stress: bergamot, frankincense, geranium, lavender, mandarin, neroli, patchouli, Roman chamomile, ylang ylang.

Anger: jasmine, neroli, orange, patchouli, petitgrain, Roman chamomile, rose, vetiver, ylang ylang.

*I'm not a
teacher: only a
fellow traveler
of whom you've
asked the way. I
pointed ahead -
ahead of myself
as well as you.*

-George Bernard Shaw

Hoping always to be on the cutting edge of education, technology, and offering my clients the best opportunity to engage in their own wellness, this year's newsletter will reflect the above. It is my desire to share with you my professional association ABMP or Associated Massage and Bodywork Professionals. This newsletter and the Body Sense digital version is one way I can offer you the best of both worlds.

Recently receiving from them a plaque recognizing my affiliation with them for 20 years, reminds me of the direction of my business, and of serving you and the community for the past 23 years. This year enabled me to travel to learn of the roll of Essential Oils in the Oncology Population, and a week-end class Sent to Annoint and Heal traveling through history applying the healing techniques and oils that were annointed for health and healing.

With Gratitude and Joy I thank you for enabling me to continue my learning curve daily while you re-connect with your body on the table. Thank you for your referrals to OHL and for the gift certificates that you generously share. May you and your loved ones have a rich Christmas, Holiday and Abundant New Year of robust health.

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