

Natural Healing Express Weekly

Column Volume 60 Benefits of Massage

This week we'll chat about one of my favorite aspects of Natural Health and Healing: Massage. The Chinese have been utilizing massage for various medical concerns for centuries. Although it is getting more and more popular here in the States, we sometimes have a narrow view of the many benefits.

Yes, most of us love to have a massage when we are feeling muscle pain. Massages soothe and elongate the muscles and break loose pockets of lactic acid which build up during work outs, both intentional and non-intentional ones, such as those on the Honey Do list.

On a technical note, here's why massage helps even more for those tired and sore muscles. Exercise causes tears in muscle fibers which illicit the immune reaction of inflammation. A newly released study found that massage reduces the production of cytokines, which help to produce inflammation in the body. Massage also stimulates the mitochondria, which are the cells that convert glucose to energy essential for cellular repair and optimal function.

Now let's look at more benefits of massage such as reducing hypertension, which seems like a good enough reason alone to have a monthly massage. Massage stimulates the vagus nerve which emerges from the brain. The vagus nerve has a very important function – it regulates blood pressure. While I am not saying lowering your blood pressure is as easy as getting a massage, I am saying that it can help tremendously, especially if your specific Bio-Individuality benefits from touch. And, if massage helps to lower blood pressure and reduce hypertension at the same time, why not give it a shot?

Another important benefit of massage is that it boosts immunity. Cortisol, which is produced in seriously crazy quantities during stress, also kills cells important for immunity. Massage reduces stress levels as well as cortisol. This helps you to avoid nasty things like colds and flus. Also, cortisol is a heavy influence on the dreaded belly fat.

Along with helping reduce cortisol, massage can help reduce anxiety. Massage is also known to help with minor to substantial forms of depression because it helps to release endorphins, eventually soothing and calming the body.

In the United States alone, more than 60% of the 45 million Americans who suffer from chronic headaches suffer from migraines. The disorder can be debilitating and typically results from high stress levels and/or lack of sleep but can also begin due to lack of trace vitamins and minerals. Massage eases the pressure during a migraine or a tension related headache by smoothing and releasing the trigger points thus reducing the tension.

There are many more situational aspects of the body where massage can be of assistance. Examples of those would be post-operative surgical recovery, injury and accident recovery, trauma, post-traumatic stress disorders and arthritis just to name a few.

However, the one benefit I found the most interesting was proven during a recent study by Tiffany Field, a professor of pediatrics. Ms. Field proved that massage can help premature babies gain weight. Human touch is a powerful healer.

At Natural Healing Express, we are very fortunate to have a highly trained and energetic massage therapist, Nicole Henze. Nicole, who is licensed and certified, books appointment at our Lena location on Wednesday and Saturdays. Massages are available in half hour, hour and hour and a half increments and we kindly ask that you call ahead for an appointment since they fill quickly.

Come on out and enjoy a healthy massage or purchase a gift certificate for someone who could benefit from a session.

Hope to see you soon and as always, please contact us via one of the following methods. Natural Healing Express: Phone 815 990 8732, email: skscham@aol.com 204 W Main St, Lena, IL 61048.

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