



# In the Balance

Massage news and tips for your good health

Sojourn Therapeutic Massage

815-741-9741

Summer Issue

**stress relief**

**reduced muscle tension**

**pain relief**

**more restful sleep**

**improved circulation**

**healthier joints**

**improved posture**

**quicker recovery from illness and injury**

**fewer headaches**

**restored humor**

**increased energy**

**improved outlook on life**

## Research shows massage increases circulation

### Why is this good news?

Circulation is not optional. We rely on it to grow and for every bodily function. It allows both the blood and the lymphatic fluids (directly linked to the health of the immune system) to bring nutrition to our billions of cells. It also removes waste products and toxins which make us uncomfortable and challenge our good health.

### Circulation enhances self-healing

Massage works directly to increase circulation by pushing fluids through the body. It works indirectly to increase circulation by relaxing us, allowing the blood vessels to expand. Circulation works beautifully to enhance the body's own self-healing properties, bringing nutrition and oxygen to where it is needed. For example, your massage practitioner doesn't cure your headache. Massage increases circulation which brings fresh blood to your head and neck, and—voilà—your headache fades.

Even if you massage only one area, circulation is increased throughout the body. Look in the mirror after your massage. Your flushed cheeks, even when you haven't received a massage to your face, are testament to increased blood flow.



*As you relax with massage, your circulation increases, bringing nutrition and oxygen to tissues throughout your body.*

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*Protect your skin from the sun with a broad spectrum sunscreen.*

## Hot fun in the summertime

### How to protect your skin

Dermatologists now say that it's important to protect your skin year round, not just during the summer. But with the good weather comes an inclination to spend hours out-of-doors playing sports, enjoying nature, and sprucing up our homes and gardens.

### What is the best way to safeguard your skin?

Experts usually recommend that you use a broad-spectrum sunscreen that offers both UVA and UVB protection. UVA blocker protects your skin from premature aging and from melanoma skin cancer. UVB blocker prevents sunburn and the development of other kinds of skin cancer.

A rule of thumb is to use a sunscreen with a SPF of 15 or higher. If you are going to be in and out of your car, sunscreens with a SPF of 15 is plenty. If you'll be outside for extended periods of time, use one that contains a SPF of 25 or higher. Even on cloudy days, ultraviolet rays can cause sunburn and premature aging. Waterproof sunscreen and frequent application is a must if you are swimming or perspire heavily.

Some say that in addition to sunscreen covering up is also desirable. Wear a wide-brimmed hat and long, loose clothing to protect your skin and stay comfortable in the heat. ~



*It's important to drink extra water when your activity level is high.*

## Drink water for good health

It's always important to drink water, but when the temperature rises and our activity level increases, it's even more important. We can't always rely on thirst. The experts say to drink two quarts daily, not including juice, milk, or carbonated beverages. You need lots of water to flush the kidneys, bladder and colon, and to prevent dehydration which can make you feel tired and uncomfortable—and even cause headaches. Dehydration can be especially detrimental to people with diseases like high blood pressure, asthma, stomach ulcers and arthritis.

Note: When you get a massage, fluid is squeezed from your muscles bringing in new blood and nutrition. Drinking extra water is important to help rehydrate your tissues and carry away the flushed waste products that cause soreness and fatigue. ~



### *Circulation (cont'd)*

#### **Benefits from increased circulation:**

- **Reduced soreness after a workout.** Massage speeds the removal of lactic acid and other waste products that cause soreness from your muscles. It also works to bring in oxygen and nutrients your muscles need to repair and rejuvenate.
- **Repair of injuries.** Though direct massage to an injury may not be appropriate, an overall boost in circulation helps you heal faster.
- **Better joint health.** Whether you have arthritis, a sports injury, or everyday wear and tear, your joints' natural lubrication can improve with massage. Swelling is often reduced as well.
- **Support for those in recovery.** If you're recovering from a chemical addiction or eating disorder, increased circulation can help repair stressed tissues and, in turn, help reduce your feelings of achiness and fatigue.
- **Reduces pain and swelling when you are laid up.** If you are forced to limit your activity due to surgery, for example, improved circulation can not only help you heal, but can also relieve those aches and pains from too much time spent on the couch. Massage also drains tissues of excess fluids caused by recent surgery or injury.
- **Alertness and clear thinking.** Increased oxygen in the blood flow to your brain reduces mental tiredness and, at least temporarily, improves your ability to concentrate.
- **Stress relief.** Accumulated stress hormones which can make you irritable and overly sensitive are flushed away with massage. With your tissues revitalized, you will be more relaxed and may even experience relief from anxiety and depression! ~



*Increased circulation from massage can help reduce soreness and speed recovery after a workout .*

# Ease your headache

## Tips to relieve the pain

Up to 50 million Americans suffer from chronic headaches. There are many causes including muscle tension, especially neck tension, chemical sensitivity, hormonal changes, overindulgence in food or drink, and environmental causes.

You may not know what causes your headaches, but most headaches involve muscle tension, either as a cause or an effect. Tight, knotted muscles can reduce the flow of oxygen and blood to your brain and cause or increase headache pain.

Massage not only relieves tight muscles, but also releases endorphins, the body's natural pain relievers. Regular massage can reduce chronically held tension, resulting in fewer headaches.

## Try these when you can't get in for massage.

1. **Cold or hot packs.** Put ice (or a bag of frozen peas) in a cloth and press it against the painful spot, or against the back of your neck. If you don't get relief, switch to a heating pad, hot water bottle, or a microwavable hot pack. Try each for 15 to 20 minutes at a time.
2. **Brush your hair.** Brush from the temple, in small circles, moving gradually to the base of the skull. Do one side a time. Then work down the center of your head.
3. **Drink plenty of water.** Drinking water will help flush toxins, due to medications, diet, or the environment from your system.
4. **Massage yourself.** Use your fingers to rub in small circles on your forehead, temples, and scalp. Massage for up to 30 seconds in each spot. Use a comfortable amount of pressure. Also try neck massage. Reach around and cup the base of your neck with your palm. Using a comfortable amount of pressure, knead the muscle slowly from bottom to top. ~



*Try easing your headache with massage to your forehead, temples and neck.*

*What integrative medicine does is reduce your stress, and we know that 85 percent of all illnesses are stress-related.... Approaches such as biofeedback, chiropractic, acupuncture, aromatherapy, music, meditation, massage, yoga...enhance your overall well-being as well as decreasing all the cortisol and stressors.*

*—Singer Naomi Judd after healing from hepatitis C*

# Massage nurtures during weight loss

## Boost your energy and feeling of self-acceptance



If you're trying to lose weight, consider supporting yourself with massage as a non-caloric treat. For one thing, massage is a pleasurable activity that's likely to result in an increased sense of energy. Beyond that, relaxing with massage can reduce stress and the tendency to overeat—after all, weighing more than you would like is stressful enough.

Massage helps you become more aware of your body including any areas you may dislike, and therefore ignore. During massage, you have the opportunity to re-experience your body, the frame of bones and connecting muscles and other tissues, as a thing of beauty and pleasure. Many people find they experience greater self-acceptance, a needed part of any weight loss program. ~

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**Your newsletter on massage! See inside:**

- The benefits of good circulation
- Protect your skin from the sun
- Drinking water for health
- Ease your headache
- Massage nurtures during weight loss

**Short of time this  
summer to shop for  
gifts?**



**Give the gift of  
relaxation ... give**

*Massage*

*From the time humans in all cultures experienced pain, this type of touch has always alleviated discomfort. It works on the premise ... that the body can heal itself if given a chance. Massage nurtures the body's talent for healing by triggering and supporting the body's own healing response.*  
—Andrew Weil, MD, Author of *Spontaneous Healing*

**Did you know that massage...**

- Relieves muscle spasms
- Reduces muscle soreness after exercise
- Stimulates the immune system
- Prevents injuries by relieving chronic tension
- Helps improve posture and restore normal movement
- Relieves stress and improves sleep
- Stimulates the release of natural pain relievers

