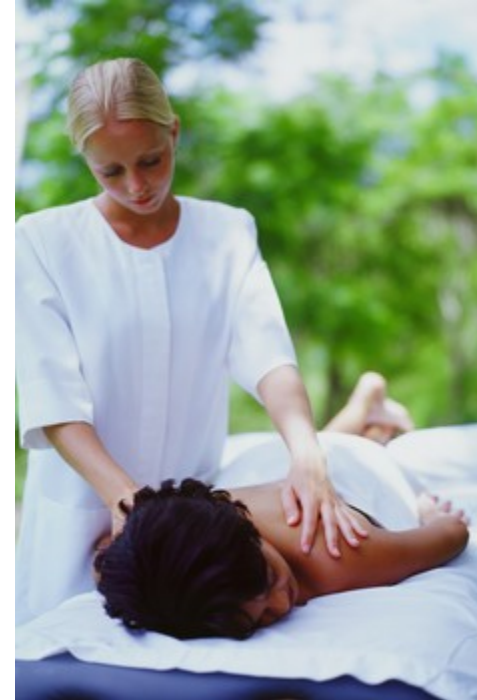


Five Reasons to Get a Massage Today

Massage offers real health benefits, so much so that some conventional hospitals are making them a standard therapy for surgery patients and others.

This interesting CNN article details many of these benefits (including some that may surprise you). Along with promoting relaxation and improving your sense of well-being, getting a massage has been shown to:

- Relieve pain (from migraines, labor, fibromyalgia and even cancer)
- Boost your level of alertness and attention
- Increase your body's natural killer cells, which help your immune system to defend against illness
- Reduce stress, anxiety and depression, and ease insomnia
- Decrease symptoms of PMS



[CNN.com](#) March 8, 2007

Dr. Mercola's Comment:

If you've never had a professional massage before, it will likely only take you one visit to understand why they're becoming so popular: they feel great! This is because massage affects the nervous system through nerve endings in the skin, stimulating the release of endorphins, the body's natural 'feel good' chemicals.

Massage is one of the oldest and simplest forms of medical care used to ease pain and anxiety, and massages have profound health benefits. Massages, even between you and your significant other, can be an [excellent addition to your healthy lifestyle](#).

Endorphins help induce relaxation and a sense of well-being, relieve pain and reduce levels of stress chemicals such as cortisol and noradrenaline -- reversing the damaging effects of stress by slowing heart rate, respiration and metabolism and lowering raised blood pressure.

Stronger massage stimulates blood circulation to improve the supply of oxygen and nutrients to body tissues and helps the lymphatic system to flush away waste products. It eases tense and knotted muscles and stiff joints, improving mobility and flexibility.

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Massage is said to increase activity of the vagus nerve, one of 10 cranial nerves, that affects the secretion of food absorption hormones, heart rate and respiration. It has proven to be an effective therapy for a variety of health conditions -- particularly [stress-related tension](#), which experts believe accounts for as much as 80 percent to 90 percent of disease.

In addition to the benefits listed above, massage can:

- Stimulate the lymph system, the body's natural defense, against toxic invaders.
- Relax and soften injured and overused muscles, reducing spasms and cramping.
- Provide arthritis relief by increasing joint flexibility.
- Reduce recovery time for strenuous workouts and eliminate subsequent pains of the athlete at any level.
- Reduce post-surgery adhesions and edema and reduce and realign scar tissue after healing has occurred.
- Contribute to shorter labor and reduce tearing for expectant mothers.

On [Vital Votes](#), reader Debrah from Fort Wayne, Indiana adds:

"It is always good to see positive publicity on massage -- I am a massage therapist and a Jin Shin Do Acupressurist. I would like to add that though I love massage, acupressure is especially effective for many health issues because one gets the benefits of both massage and acupuncture at the same time (I noticed one of the studies compared massage to acupuncture).

"I teach classes for CEU's for massage and bodywork professionals and I teach for lay people who would like to learn simple techniques to use for self and family/friends. Nothing beats a professional treatment but I also feel it is important to empower my clients -- it is so reassuring to know that a simple acupressure treatment could help headaches, all types of pain and digestive problems -- no need to go for drugs!

"Bodywork (massage, acupressure, chiropractic adjustments, cranial work) of all kinds can be just the thing to get people out of the downward health spiral in to an upward spiral -- if you feel good it is easier to be motivated to exercise and prepare healthy food!"

Other responses to this article can be viewed at [Vital Votes](#), and you can add your own thoughts or vote on comments by [first registering at Vital Votes](#).

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