



Staying in Touch®

Hello—

How are things going for you?

Before we leave summer behind and move into the hectic Fall season, take a little time to catch your breath and relax.

Everyday life can present so many demands on our time and energy that sometimes we have to step back and make sure we're taking care of our basic needs.

This month's lead article is a good reminder of how massage therapy is one of the best ways to help you stay healthy and reduce stress.

The saying "You're only as old as you feel" is addressed in the article on brain aging. How does your outlook on life and the way you choose to live affect your long-term health? What can you do to help your brain remain younger as you get older? Check out this interesting information.

Enjoy the rest of your summer; see you soon for your next massage!

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Tell your loved ones what you love about massage; your referrals are always appreciated!

How massage therapy can improve your overall health

By Malissa Martin

Some people still believe massage therapy is an indulgence purely for relaxation. The health benefits of massage, however, have proven otherwise.

Today we know that our mind-body connection means excessive stress brings on or exacerbates illness by reducing our own natural immunity to disease. People who value their health know that, like a healthy diet and exercise, regular massage treatments are a valuable part of a stress-reduction plan.

Anxiety, depression and other mental health conditions can be better managed with massage therapy, according an article on the Mayo Clinic website (mayoclinic.org). In addition, massage helps reduce or alleviate headaches, joint pain, digestive disorders, fibromyalgia and much more.

Christian Monk, a second-generation massage therapist in Michigan, wants to spread the word of the health benefits of massage therapy. For the last 12 years, the Army veteran has seen the positive impact massage can have on a person's well-being.

She says a 12-year client brought in his daughter, who did not think she wanted massage.

"So she gets her massage and she comes out the room and she says, 'Girl, I want to buy this.' She was like a different person than what she was when she walked in," Monk says. "She was very apprehensive about massage and the benefits, because people don't know until they actually experience it. People just don't know that they're wound up that tight and that they need that touch—and that touch is so important."

Massage therapy has many forms, applied according to a therapist's training and a client's ailments. ...



Swedish massage consists of long, smooth, slow strokes toward the heart, to relax the body and mind, stimulate surface blood flow and relieve pain.

The term deep tissue massage refers to increased pressure applied by a therapist aiming to alleviate chronic pain and increase range of motion.

Sports massage can help relieve soft-tissue aches and muscle stiffness to prepare for events or recover from exercise. This type of massage isn't just for sports injuries though. It can be beneficial to anyone who engages in repetitive physical activity.

Children and the elderly — who often are isolated and deprived of human touch — also can benefit from bodywork.

Massage therapy is good for almost anyone, whether they are active or sedentary. So the next time you're stressed, overwhelmed or in pain, consider getting a massage. It may help your overall health to massage that issue out of your tissue.

Those who feel younger than their age show less brain aging

They say you're only as old as you feel. Now, new research suggests that there may be some truth to the expression, finding that those who feel younger than their age actually do show fewer signs of brain aging.

Carried out by researchers at Seoul National University in Korea, the new small-scale study looked at whether how old we feel—also called our subjective age—does reflect how our bodies are aging.

"Why do some people feel younger or older than their real age?" asks Dr. Jeanyung Chey. "Some possibilities include depressive states, personality differences or physical health. However, no one had investigated brain aging processes as a possible reason for differences in subjective age." ...

The results showed that participants who felt younger than their age were more likely to score higher on a memory test, reported better health and were less likely to report symptoms of depression.

In addition, those who felt younger than their age also showed increased gray

matter volume in key brain regions.

"We found that people who feel younger have the structural characteristics of a younger brain," said Chey. "Importantly, this difference remains robust even when other possible factors, including personality, subjective health, depressive symptoms, or cognitive functions, are accounted for."

The study is the first to find a link between subjective age and brain aging, with the team hypothesizing that those who feel older may be able to feel the aging process in their brain, as their loss of gray matter may make cognitive tasks more challenging.

Another possibility is that those who feel younger than their age are more likely to lead a more physically and mentally active life, which could cause improvements in brain health, while for those who feel older, the opposite could be true.

"If somebody feels older than their age, it could be a sign for them to evaluate their lifestyle, habits and activities that could contribute to brain aging and take measures to better care for their brain health," said Chey.

The results can be found published online in the journal *Frontiers in Aging Neuroscience*.

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**Life is like riding a bicycle.
To keep your balance,
you must keep moving.**

—Albert Einstein

The content of this newsletter is not intended to replace professional medical advice. If you're ill, please consult a physician.