



# Staying in Touch®

## How are things going?

Do you ever look into ways to improve the quality of your life and to avoid threats to your health? There are plenty of studies out there that can help you evaluate which things can contribute to a healthier, happier life for you and your loved ones.

One online source you might find helpful is StudyFinds.org. You'll find all sorts of studies that could prove useful.

See the back page to read excerpts from two of these studies.

This month's featured article comes from Canada and shares some insights on massage benefits from two therapists practicing in Toronto.

The simple, recurring theme in all these massage-based studies is that regular massage can help you maintain a more balanced, healthier life.

See you soon for your next soothing massage!



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

**—Albert Einstein**

## 6 Surprising Benefits of Massage Therapy by Katharine Watts

**Sure, it can help you relax—but massage therapy can do much more than that.**

**~ It counteracts all that sitting you do—**“Most individuals are dealing with some kind of postural stress,” says Aaron Tanason, registered massage therapist, kinesiologist and owner at Paleolife Massage Therapy in Toronto. “More often than not [that stress] tends to manifest in the shoulders and neck.” But desk workers, beware. More advanced forms of postural stress show up as pain or weakness in the low back and gluteals caused by prolonged periods of sitting. Luckily, massage can help to counteract the imbalance caused from sitting.

**~ It eases muscle pain—**Got sore muscles? Massage therapy can help. “Massage increases and improves circulation, just like rubbing your elbow when you knock it on a table helps to relieve the pain,” says Tanason. A 2011 study published in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*, found benefits of massage therapy as effective as other methods of treatment for chronic back pain.

**~ It soothes anxiety and depression—**“Human touch, in a context that is safe, friendly and professional, can be incredibly therapeutic and relaxing,” says Tanason. Women diagnosed with breast cancer who received massage therapy three times a week reported being less depressed and less angry, according to a 2005 study published in the *International Journal of Neuroscience*.



**~ It improves sleep—**Not only do benefits of massage encourage a restful sleep, it also helps those who can't otherwise comfortably rest. “Massage promotes relaxation and sleep in those undergoing chemo or radiation therapy,” says Lisa Marie de Miranda, registered massage therapist and kinesiologist at Paleolife Massage Therapy. Also, massages help infants sleep more, cry less and be less stressed, according to research from the University of Warwick.

**~ It boosts immunity—**A 2010 study published in the *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine* found that massage boosts patients' white blood cell count, which plays a large role in defending the body from disease. Additionally, it also “improves immune function for individuals with HIV,” says de Miranda.

**~ It relieves headaches—**Next time a headache hits, try booking a last-minute massage. “Massage decreases frequency and severity of tension headaches,” says de Miranda. Research from Granada University in Spain found that a single session of massage therapy immediately affects perceived pain in patients with chronic tension headaches.

Source: [www.besthealthmag.ca](http://www.besthealthmag.ca)

**Despite Constant Health Warnings, Americans Are Still Sitting Too Much** *by Ben Renner*

Everybody needs a little couch time every now and then. That being said, many Americans are seriously overdoing it when it comes to sitting and lounging around. According to a new study of 51,000 Americans, most sit for prolonged periods of time nearly every day—despite public health messages warning that inactivity increases the risk of diabetes, obesity, heart disease, and even cancer.

Researchers believe that most Americans pick up the tendency to sit for hours at a time during childhood, and end up maintaining the habit well into adulthood. “We think a lot of these sedentary habits are formed early, so if we can make changes that help children be more active, it could pay off in the future, both for children as they grow to adulthood and for future health-care spending.

The study is published in the *Journal of the American Medical Assn.*

Source: studyfinds.org

**Physically Fit People Have Stronger, Sharper Brains** *by John Anderer*

A team of German scientists has discovered that keeping oneself physically fit is associated with better brain structure and functioning in young adults.

The research team believes their findings indicate that if a person can improve their physical fitness, it may lead to improved cognitive ability, including elevated memory retention and superior problem solving.

Once researchers decided they wanted to investigate the connection between exercise and brain functioning, they opted to use a publicly accessible database of 1,206 MRI scans. The average volunteer age was 30 years old.

All of the MRI volunteers also underwent some additional testing; each person was asked to walk as far as they could within two minutes, and each distance was recorded. Then, each person also took a series of cognitive tests designed to measure memory, reasoning, sharpness, and judgment.

Researchers determined that young, healthy adults who were able to walk the farthest distances within two minutes scored the highest on the cognitive performance tests.

Source: studyfinds.org

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***Thousands of candles can be lighted from a single candle,  
and the life of the candle will not be shortened.  
Happiness never decreases by being shared.***

**—Buddha**

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