



# Staying in Touch®

## A better summer . . .

Our prospects for a more normal summer are improving! Every day seems more hopeful, with more of our old routine activities returning. Just be sure to take your time getting back to your old ways and not rush things.

Whether you'll be traveling this summer or staying close to home, remember a soothing massage will help you to feel your best and can strengthen your immune system and overall health. The summer will be much more enjoyable if you take proper care of yourself!

This month's articles offer fresh reminders of massage's many benefits to you. To get the best results, sticking to a regular schedule for your massage sessions will give you the best bang for your buck.

Has this past year inspired you to take a closer look at your life and your priorities? When we have a chance to step back from our day-to-day lives, reevaluate our goals, and reconfirm that we're headed down our chosen path, we can move forward in life with renewed purpose and energy.

Have a most enjoyable and healthy summer; see you soon!

## Six Reasons to Seek Massage Therapy *By Ernest Hamilton*

Today, even doctors are combining massage with standard procedures to treat a wide range of afflictions. Here are some of the benefits massage offers:

**Reducing Anxiety**— If you suffer from anxiety, you'll be pleased to know that a study showed massage could reduce symptoms of the disorder.

Dr. Rapaport, who conducted the research, explained that a rubdown increases your parasympathetic (or calming) response, and this decreases the anxiousness you're experiencing.

What's promising is that a follow-up with participants found a significant number were anxiety-free for as long as six to 18 months after the study. This news suggests that the effects can be long-lasting.

**Improving circulation**— When the hands press on parts of the body during a massage, circulation improves and supplies damaged muscles with the blood supply they need for healing. When the hands are lifted, the same pressure is released, and new blood flows into the tissues.

Lymph fluid circulates better and carries metabolic waste products away from your internal organs and muscles.

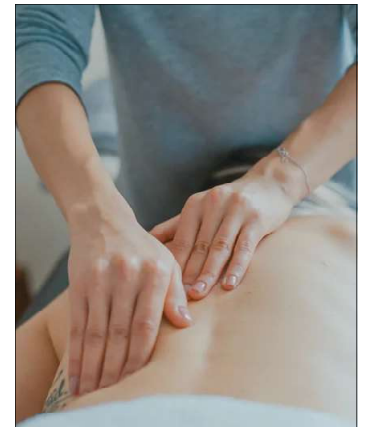
**Lowering Blood Pressure**— Research results published in the *Biological Research for Nursing* journal showed people who had regular back massages had lower blood pressure levels than those who relaxed for the same amount of time.

**Reducing Risks of Health Issues**— Regular massages reduce cortisol levels and the causes for anxiety, stress, and depression. The lowering of these triggers can reduce the risk of heart attack, stroke, and several other health problems.

**Improving immune function**— Research shows that consistent massage sessions can reduce stress and boost your immune system, your natural protection against germs and bacteria. You'll lower your risk of infection.

**Relieving Pain**— When you have pain, massage therapy helps eliminate tense

(See *Six Reasons ...* on back)



### Power of touch: How massage and hugs stimulate mood-enhancing chemicals

**OXYTOCIN** is a hormone that makes us feel bonded, 'facilitating' the release of two key brain chemicals, dopamine and serotonin, which both affect mood, says Paul Zak, a professor of economic sciences, psychology and management at Claremont Graduate University in California.

In one of his studies, published in the journal *Alternative Therapies* in 2012, Professor Zak found that just 15 minutes of massage caused oxytocin levels to rise by 17 per cent. Hugging and kissing also stimulate oxytocin production. **Source:** *Irishnews.com*

## Six Reasons ...

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muscles, increase flexibility, and relax the body. The improved circulation brings nutrients and oxygen to the damaged area. This therapy also releases endorphins which are pain-killing hormones.

**Other Benefits:** More research is needed to support the results of studies that show the following conditions can benefit from massage:

- **Insomnia related to stress**
- **Digestive disorders**
- **Lower and upper back pain**
- **Fibromyalgia**
- **Headaches**
- **Nerve, joint, and neck pain**
- **Sports injuries**

**Conclusion:** As you've seen, getting a massage can benefit your health and well-being in many ways. However, it's essential to note that most of the positive results occur after regular sessions and not the one-off visit.

**Source:** latinpost.com

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**Front page photo by Toa Heftiba**

## Cup of leafy green veggies (even in a smoothie) a day keeps heart disease away! by Chris Melore

Need more convincing that you should add leafy green vegetables to your daily diet? Not only are they good for the muscles and waistline, a new study reveals they're also good for the heart. Researchers in Australia find nitrate-rich vegetables, leafy greens and beetroot lower blood pressure and the risk of developing heart disease.

A team from Edith Cowan University says consuming just one cup of raw leafy greens each day can result in a 26-percent lower chance of heart disease later in life. The nitrate-rich foods include spinach, broccoli, lettuce, cabbage, and kale.

The results reveal those eating the most nitrate-rich vegetables lowered their systolic blood pressure by 2.5 mm Hg. This number ... shows how much pressure someone's blood is applying on the artery walls when the heart beats. Additionally, researchers discovered participants eating the most leafy greens had between a 12 and 26 percent lower chance of cardiovascular disease.

The study appears in the *European Journal of Epidemiology*. **Source:** studyfinds.org

### Make a difference!

You can help someone you care about feel better and stay healthier through the gift of massage. Make their day with a gift certificate for a relaxing massage session. Call today!

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**The secret of your future is hidden in your daily routine.**

**—Mike Murdock**