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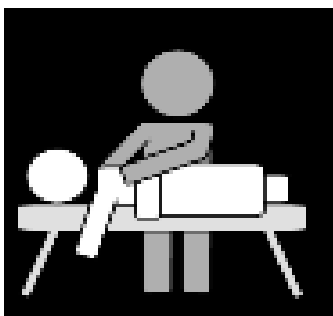
HEALTHY HERALD

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Time for a Massage

PT Corner

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If you haven't had a massage in a while, or have never had one, then it may be time. There is overwhelming evidence revealing the many benefits massage provides. It is no longer a luxury for a few people, but a treatment option being sought by those who know these benefits and want an alternative treatment to what ails them. It is estimated that 30% of the population receive massages regularly, while 62% get Chiropractic treatment, 33% Acupuncture and 55% Herbal Medicine. The main reasons people seek alternative treatments are to control pain and improve their quality of life and overall health.

The practice of massage therapy is defined as engaging in applying a scientific system of activity to the muscular structure of the human body by means of stroking, kneading, tapping and vibrating with the hands or tools for the purpose of improving muscle tone and circulation. There are many types of massage: Swedish or European,

Asian, Myofascial, Neuromuscular, and Trigger point to name a few. The Swedish Massage is the most common form and may include any of the 5 strokes: gliding, kneading, rubbing, tapping, or vibrating. The various forms of Asian Massage focus on utilizing the acupressure points. Myofascial Release Massage focuses on releasing the fascia for the purpose of improving mobility and function. A Neuromuscular Massage differs in that it aims to stimulate specific areas of the muscle known as trigger points and help balance the central nervous system with the musculoskeletal system. Trigger Point massage aims at deactivating trigger points to help relieve pain referred elsewhere in the body—such as a headache or toothache.

All these different types of massage have many influences on the body that may include improving circulation, relaxing muscles, increasing range of motion, stimulating flow of lymph system, relieving pain, improving sleep, decreasing anxiety, relieving constipation and im-

proving quality of life. A recent study of those with knee osteoarthritis who received a 30-60 minute Swedish massage weekly for 24 weeks were found to have significant reduction in pain with functional improvement compared to a control group with no treatment. There are several studies that have shown the effect massage has on reducing anxiety and agitation while improving sleep with those who have dementia residing in nursing homes. This not only helps the individual but also the medical staff and other residents. Positive results have been shown with those who have Parkinson's as well. In addition even those with various forms of cancer such as bone or breast cancer that have intractable pain have found relief from massage in decreasing their pain and anxiety. Decreasing pain medication with reduction of side effects is another added benefit for many of these patients.

Even if you don't have a serious illness, you can reap the benefits from a massage—a good night's sleep and mental sharpness!

TIP FROM A TRAINER by Randi Kreuger

Switching On

What if I told you there is a way to burn more calories every day that doesn't require another sweaty cardio session or intense workout? What if I told you it would also make your gym sessions more productive, daily tasks easier and help reduce pain? And it's as simple as a system update.

To stay switched on you need to consider your daily life activities. For example, if you sit at a

desk, are you working your back and abdominal muscles for support, and including stretches to open the front body? Let's say you are, good for you! Now, do you apply those muscular techniques outside the gym? If you do you are staying switched on.

Most of us don't and that is where you can make the difference. Practice sitting on the edge of your chair and don't use your hands to get up. Use your squat when picking up a dropped

item. Engage abdominals when you are sweeping up, etc.

Switching on muscles more often equals improved concentration/activation which equals greater focus/concentration which equals increased work production which equals a stronger body which equals less pain and a better quality of life!

