

To Your Health

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Member, Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals

Invest in Your Health

Massage Offers Excellent Return on Investment

"Invest for the long term" is great financial advice, but it's also great healthcare advice. Never is investing for the long term more important than when you are making day-to-day decisions about your health. There are short-term gains from taking care of your health, to be sure, but the long-term benefits are not to be underestimated.

You already know the value of bodywork. For all the short-term stress and pain relief you get from massage today, there are lasting rewards you'll thank yourself for down the road. Massage therapy as a preventive measure and part of an ongoing care regimen can mean fewer visits to the doctor, as well as fewer

emotionally and spiritually, and maintain harmonious relationships with coworkers, family, and friends.

Research supports the value of massage. Massage provides many benefits, including improved concentration, energy, circulation, and self-esteem, as well as reduced stress, fatigue, and pain. It's helpful with more acute health conditions, also. If you, or a loved one, are already dealing with a health condition, massage is an even more important part of your healthcare planning.

Research shows:
-- Alzheimer's patients exhibit reduced irritability, pacing, and restlessness after



Massage is a health investment, helping to manage stress, support wellness, and boost immunity.

co-pays, prescriptions, and over-the-counter medications. Ultimately, it means a healthier and happier you.

An Excellent Value

As you plan the family budget, ponder how massage therapy impacts your ability to make good decisions, cope with extra responsibilities, stay on an even keel

neck and shoulder massage.

-- Deep-tissue massage is effective in treating arthritis, back pain, fibromyalgia, and osteoarthritis.

-- Fibromyalgia patients receiving massage have fewer sleep problems and less anxiety, depression, fatigue, pain, and stiffness.

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Your worst enemy cannot harm you as much as your thoughts unguarded

-Shakyamuni Buddha

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-- Massage during labor appears to help block pain, reduce stress and anxiety, and relax muscles. Some medical professionals say massage shortens labor.

-- Massage can reduce sports-related soreness and improve circulation, and is beneficial in reducing symptoms associated with arthritis, asthma, burns, high blood pressure, and premenstrual syndrome.

-- Oncology patients show less anxiety, depression, fatigue, nausea, and pain following massage therapy.

-- Preterm babies receiving massage therapy gain more weight and have shorter hospital stays.

-- Massage therapy is effective in reducing post-surgical pain and can even reduce the time required for post-operative hospital stays.

You may be trimming some extras out of your budget, as many Americans are. When weighing what goes and what stays, consider what an excellent value massage is, especially in relation to things that may be less valuable, but still cost you plenty. The price of massage has remained stable in recent years, while the cost of movies, dining out, and sports events have risen. Which of these activities has the power to improve your health and which has a better return on investment?

Get Creative

There are many ways to keep massage in your life if you use your imagination. While vacations are definitely needed right now by just about everybody, more and more Americans are staying closer to home and taking "staycations." How about planning a healthy, home-based vacation and including massage as part of your relaxation?

When it comes to gift-giving occasions, why not give and ask for massage gift certificates? Massage makes a wonderful replacement for flowers that wilt, sweaters that don't fit, or another box of fattening candy. Some folks buy spa packages or put together their own outings with a massage, a museum excursion, or lunch at a favorite restaurant. Mothers, daughters, aunts, and grandmothers are enjoying spas together and massage is a key part of the package. These events create bonding experiences that launch new traditions and reinforce a healthy lifestyle.

Gift certificates for chair massage at airports are an option for weary travelers, as is chair massage at malls for package-laden shoppers. If you are an employer, consider gifting your staff with on-site chair massage, which has been shown to reduce stress and improve performance. Just think of it as the ultimate pat on the back for staff and one that pays you back.

Maintain Well-Being

You may be tempted to trim your wellness budget when economic times are tough. Yet, a recent national consumer survey showed most massage-minded Americans are still committed to maintaining the health benefits they experience with massage. It only makes sense. The better you feel, the better job you can do of caring for yourself and your loved ones. Massage therapy will also help families under stress create healthier households, and

more focused and relaxed moms and dads. Children are sensitive and often pick up on tension in a household; parents who are taking care of themselves are more likely to provide a sense of calm to their kids. This goes for caregivers of aging parents, too.

Now, more than ever, massage should play a role in reducing your stress and strengthening your health. When people feel their best, they are more able to face the challenges difficult times present. With greater health and peace of mind, you can face difficulties with poise, clarity of purpose, and strengthened emotional reserves.

Truly, massage is more than a luxury--it's a vital part of self-care that has a positive ripple effect on you as you work, play, and care for others. Investing in your health is one investment that's sure to pay off.



The value of bodywork runs deep, for nothing is more valuable than good health.

Prevent the Afternoon Slump

Some Tips for P.M. Energy

Jerry V. Teplitz

If you're like most people, you've experienced the afternoon slump. You know the feeling -- it's only 2 p.m., yet you feel drained. Fortunately, you can employ methods to reduce the slump's frequency and shorten its duration.

DRINK WATER.

Your body uses water even if you're not exercising. If you wait until you feel thirsty, you're already dehydrated. Keep a water bottle handy all day.

AVOID SUGAR AND SIMPLE CARBOHYDRATES.

While a mid-afternoon candy bar may give you a quick rush, it actually worsens the slump. Instead, choose protein-rich foods and complex carbs.

EAT SMALL MEALS.

Have six small meals over the course of the day instead of three large ones. Big meals cause the digestive process to divert blood from your brain to use in the digestive track.

EVALUATE YOUR LIGHTING.

Most offices are lit with cool, white fluorescent tubes, which have a terrible effect on how people feel and function at work. A better option is full-spectrum, fluorescent tubes.

TAKE TIME FOR WALKS.

Walking gets your blood circulating, helps you breathe better, and stimulates your brain due to the increased blood flow. Take a 5- or 10-minute walk during the day.

MEDITATE.

Meditation is great for rejuvenating your body. By meditating for 15 to 20 minutes twice a day, you're keeping your body continually energized and rested.

TAKE TIME TO BREATHE AND STRETCH.

Deep breathing exercises give you an energy boost. Also, stand up and stretch to increase blood flow and stimulate the lymphatic system.

HANDLE NEGATIVITY.

Negative people and images can have a

draining effect on your energy. Make a conscious effort to stay positive.



Avoid the drain office settings can bring on.

The Scoop on Meditation

A Simple Practice with Profound Benefits

People who meditate regularly appear internally and externally five to 10 years younger than their non-meditating peers, according to author Deepak Chopra. That's good news for the estimated 10 million people who practice meditation on an ongoing basis and experience the resulting calm it cultivates.

The rich benefits come from doing something that looks like nothing: Sitting still, being quiet, and breathing deeply. Meditation works simply but profoundly by defusing the onslaughts of life -- a racing mind, busyness, deadlines, commutes, all of which have physiological effects on well-being. Meditation calms the nervous system, decreases metabolic rate, heart rate, and blood pressure, and lowers levels of cholesterol, stress hormones, and free

radicals. It also has a direct effect on breathing, slowing and deepening respiration so more oxygen circulates throughout the body. Not only that, meditation is said to lessen feelings of anxiety and depression and improve memory and concentration. And all of this culminates in slowing the aging process, as Chopra notes.

There are many meditation techniques, including focusing on a mantra, a sacred word or phrase, or your breath. But the basic intent of all meditation is focus and attention. And it doesn't take hours a day in an ashram to meditate effectively. Benefits kick in with even a short period of devoted time.

How to begin? Wear comfortable, unrestrictive clothes, sit on a cushion or chair with your back straight (think once

again, comfort), rest your hands on your legs, let your eyes go soft and out of focus or close them, breathe slowly and deeply, and -- the hardest part -- attempt to empty your mind of thoughts and quiet the internal dialogue. When thoughts flit through your mind, let them pass without judging them and come back to your focus (your mantra, counting, etc.) and breathing.

Start with this sitting meditation technique for five minutes a day, and add on time as you get more at ease with the process. For more information on techniques and benefits, check out www.abc-of-meditation.com.

He who can no longer pause to wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead; his eyes are closed.

-Albert Einstein

2 FRIENDS, 2 SPECIALS!

Refer two friends for a massage and they will each get \$10 off a one hour massage and you will get a free massage!

START YOUR HOLIDAY SHOPPING EARLY!
Simplify your gift giving with massage gift certificates on sale now \$10 off regular rates.

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