

Benefits of Massage

Massage is an ancient healing art with enormous benefits for all the systems of the body, some of which are outlined below.

The Nervous System

The nervous system is profoundly influenced by the application of massage. The effects of massage may be soothing and sedative, providing relief from nervous irritability. Disorders, such as insomnia, tension, headaches and other stress-related conditions, respond to the healing power of touch as peace and harmony returns to the troubled mind. Alternatively, the effects of massage on the nerves may be stimulating, promoting an increase in the activity of muscles, vessels and glands governed by them. It is invaluable in cases of lethargy and fatigue.

The Muscular System

The muscular system derives enormous benefits. Muscles maintain a balance in relaxing and contracting. Some massage movements relax and stretch the muscles and soft tissue of the body, reducing muscular tension and cramp. Fibrous tissues, adhesions and old scar tissue can be broken down and cleansed of waste deposits. As muscles contract, toxic products are eliminated. Other movements produce the contraction of muscle promoting good muscle tone. Muscle fatigue and stiffness caused by over activity, and the resulting build up of toxic substances in the muscles is reduced by comfort and ease of movement.

The Skeletal System

The skeletal system is strengthened by using massage. Bone is indirectly affected by massage. Improvements to the circulation of blood and the lymph in the muscles leads to better circulation in the underlying bones, benefiting their nutrition and growth. Stiffness of the joints and pains resulting from conditions such as arthritis, are providing comfort and ease of movement.

The Circulatory System

The circulatory system also benefits from the action of massage. It takes the pressure off the arteries and veins, accelerating the flow of blood through the system, providing relief for poor circulation and cardiac

problems. The heartbeat strengthens, the rate of the heart beat decreases and the high blood pressure is reduced.

The Lymphatic System

The lymphatic system is stimulated and the flow of lymph is accelerated throughout the system. As the massage strokes are performed, the waste and poisonous substances which have accumulated in our over stressed bodies, are rapidly eliminated. When we sustain injuries, there is often a great deal of oedema (swelling) which should be dispersed into the lymphatic circulation. Massage can empty the lymph vessels and allow the swelling to disperse. If this fluid is not moved on, it becomes semi-solid and thus is unable to pass through lymph vessels. Therefore it sticks to the surrounding tissues (muscles, bones, tendons, ligaments and others) and forms what are known as adhesions. If adhesions form in a joint, their movement will be restricted permanently.

The Respiratory System

The respiratory system responds as increased activity in the lungs is stimulated by massage. As the treatment proceeds, the breath slows and deepens. If necessary, mucus and bronchial secretion can be encouraged to leave the lungs by percussive movements on the back and over the lungs.

The Digestive System

The digestive system benefits when massage promotes the peristaltic activity (wave like motion) in the colon enhancing the elimination of faecal matter and combating constipation. It strengthens the muscular walls of the intestines and abdomen, and stimulates the secretion of digestive juices from the liver, pancreas, stomach and intestines. As well as helping digestion and elimination of food, massage always increases absorption of digested foods.

The Skin

The activity and nutrition of the skin benefit from massage. The sweat and sebaceous glands are stimulated, improving their function and ensuring the elimination of waste products. As dead skin cells are removed, pores are encouraged to remain open allowing increased skin respiration, suppleness and elasticity. Skin condition texture and tone are greatly improved - the skin is healthy and glowing following a treatment.

The Urinary System

The use of abdominal and back massage promotes activity of the kidneys, which enhances the elimination of waste products and reduces fluid retention.

The Reproductive System

The reproductive system can also be improved. The abdominal and back massage can help to alleviate menstrual problems such as period pains, irregular menstruation, PMS, and the symptoms of menopause.

Massage is an excellent preventative treatment essential for the maintenance of health and fitness. Prevention is always far better than cure. Nowadays people of all ages are increasingly considering natural therapies as a way to encourage an improved sense of well-being and as a means to a long, happy and harmonious life free of illness.