

Age is a State of Mind

Combat Aging with Massage

Whether you're running a marathon or running after your grandchildren, you know that growing older doesn't mean growing old. If you're wondering how to stave off the effects of aging, the preventative and restorative nature of massage might be just what the body ordered.

Improved Circulation, Healthier Skin As we age, our circulation slows and our skin loses its youthful vitality. Experts say massage combats these effects by increasing circulation through the manipulation of tissue, improving the appearance and condition of the skin and its elasticity, and toning muscle tissue. Massage also creates a stimulating cellular function in layers of the skin and increases the production of skin-nurturing sebum.

Immunity and Stress

The majority of disease we encounter today is associated with stress. Stress is a huge factor in premature aging of the body. Research shows chronic stress ages the body, weakens immune cell function, and can make cells appear up to 17 years older than they really are. Through its effects, massage deftly attacks stress, while boosting the immune system. Massage encourages the release of oxytocin, a stress-reducing hormone and activates the parasympathetic nervous system and its relaxation response. Massage also decreases beta brainwave activity, increases dopamine and serotonin levels in the body, and reduces cortisol levels, all of which are linked to decreased stress.

Squashing the Pain Aging involves dealing with aches and pains. You might find a day of gardening brings on back pain you never experienced before, or your biking regimen now requires greater recovery time afterward. Massage can make a difference!

Massage keeps joints more mobile and stimulates the synovial fluid, which lubricates the joints and nourishes the articular cartilage. Massage also prompts the release of endorphins and other pain-reducing neurochemicals.

Arthritis can be just as debilitating. Experts predict that one-third of Americans will get arthritis as they age. Ironically, most arthritis sufferers may not think of massage when they start to explore which therapies might ease their pain. While it is doubtful an arthritic joint can "heal" completely with massage, it can feel so much better.

According to the Arthritis Foundation, an increasing number of doctors are recommending massage to their arthritis patients to help relieve the pain and stiffness. Massage can increase circulation around painful joints, bringing healing oxygen and nutrients, including amino acids, to rebuild tissue. Many report that they find better and longer-lasting relief from massage than from pharmaceuticals.

Bennies for Boomers The benefits from massage and bodywork can help bodies of all ages, Research has shown that massage:

- Improves range of motion and decreases low-back pain.
- Increases circulation, allowing the body to pump more oxygen and nutrients into tissues and vital organs.
- Provides exercise and stretching for atrophied muscles.
- Reduces swelling and scar tissue.
- Reduces recovery time from injury/surgery.
- Reduces stress, a major contributor to disease and ill health.
- Releases endorphins, the body's natural painkiller, thereby reducing the need for medications.
- Stimulates lymph flow and supports the body's natural process of detoxification.

Psychological Value In addition to all the physical benefits massage offers, there also are proven psychological changes. One of the reasons massage feels so relaxing is that there is a literal psychological benefit as dopamine and serotonin become balanced in the system. And when massage produces oxytocin in the body, there is a sense of being nurtured. Add that to the restorative effect that comes from those quiet moments during massage, and that experts say, is incredibly healing.

Turn the inevitability of aging into a positive process of change and let massage and bodywork help you along the journey. We are available to help you at the club or in your home.