



ETERNAL SPRINGS
wellness

Massage Therapy for Health and Relaxation

Planning everything, from the daunting task of deciding on the guest list to choosing the most romantic spot for your honeymoon, is a stressful experience for everyone involved – especially the bride-to-be. To keep stress from zapping your energy and to ensure that you look your most radiant when you take that walk down the aisle, experts recommend that you start a beauty and health regime at least six months prior to the big day. For optimal results, you should consider incorporating massage therapy into your regime.

Massage therapy is actually a catchall term for a cluster of healing techniques that center on the hands-on manipulation of the muscles and other soft tissues of the body. Its roots reach back thousands of years to Ancient Eastern folk medicine, as well as to the Western massage tradition that was developed in 19th-century Sweden. The principle of massage therapy is to increase circulation of the blood throughout the body, so the body is better able to take care of itself. Massage also allows nutrients and oxygen to get into tissues and make toxins and lactic acids exit the body.

Since many of today's health problems arise from stress, learning to realize and deal with the effects of stress is vital. Massage therapy is safe and effective for stress management. Too much stress can cause constant muscular tensions that reduce the flow of energy – either in the form of blood and oxygen, nerve and lymph supply, or the more subtle energy – life force, or chi. Reducing this flow leads to feelings of fatigue, heaviness, denseness in some areas, reduced flexibility and range of motion in the joints. Thus, it increases the likelihood of strain and injury and leads to a buildup of toxins in the body. Generally, blocked energy is felt as aches and pains, but can lead to a wide range of more serious problems. Massage can release this tension which will allow the body to use its own energy for healing.

There are many different approaches to massage and many different applications of it. Massage therapy is a holistic procedure that affects all systems of the body: digestive, elimination, respiratory, circulatory, lymphatic, endocrine and nervous systems.

There are also many different types of massage: Swedish, amma therapy, stress relief, acupressure, deep tissue, Thai massage, Chi Nei Tsang, Aromatherapy, cranio-scaral therapy, and the ever-popular Reflexology, just to name a few. Your massage therapist will be able to advise you on which technique will be the most beneficial for what ails you.

Massage can benefit people of all ages – babies, children, pregnant women and the elderly. It's widely used to help patients obtain relief from a myriad of problems such as: migraine, post-injury rehabilitation, whiplash, respiratory problems, arthritis, low back pain, leg aches, neuralgia, tendonitis, bursitis, neck and shoulder pain. Benefits reaped through massage therapy include: relief from fatigue, reduced tension; relaxation and renewed energy; improved circulation of blood and lymph and increased metabolism.

Next time you're having one of those days when life's little tensions have you all tied up in knots, the answer could be a soothing massage.