

# Joe Linn Massage Newsletter

April 2015

Member, Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals

## Age is a State of Mind

### Baby Boomers Combat Aging with Bodywork

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, preventing disease and injury is critical to reducing the expected growth of health-care costs headed our way, as more than 70 million U.S. baby boomers cross the 60-year-old threshold. Moreover, disease prevention is critical to, well, your health!

Whether you're a boomer who is 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 and bodywork might be just what the body ordered.

and its elasticity, and toning muscle tissue. Massage also creates a stimulating cellular function in the hypodermis, dermis, and epidermis layers of the skin and increases the production of skin-nurturing sebum.

### Immunity and Stress

If you're already a frequent recipient of massage, you know what the work does to combat daily stress. But did you know how detrimental those stressors can be?

Experts say the majority of disease we encounter today is associated with stress. Not only that, stress is a huge factor in premature aging of the body. Researchers say chronic stress ages the

*I love spring  
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if I could  
choose I would  
always greet it  
in a garden.*

-Ruth Stout



Massage therapy can play an important role in aging well and remaining youthful and healthy.

### Improved Circulation, Healthier Skin

As our bodies age, our circulation slows and our skin loses its once youthful vitality. Experts say the mechanical nature of massage combats these effects by increasing circulation through the manipulation of tissue, improving the appearance and condition of the skin

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 in the body most often associated with

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#### Office Hours and Contact

**Joe Linn Massage**

**Joe Linn**

**415-497-3176**

**By appointment only**

**Hours available Monday - Saturday**

**Call today to schedule your massage.**

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birth and bonding, 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

Part of the aging process, unfortunately, 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. Even though pain is a constant source of grief for an aging body, massage can make a difference.

The passive movement in 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.

In addition to the pains of physical exertion an aging body experiences, the discomfort caused by 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 better. And for an arthritis sufferer, better is a welcome word, particularly when there are no side effects involved.

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

Whether its reducing the symptoms of arthritis, or simply addressing the aches and pains of living an active life, massage can play an important role in aging well.

## Bennies for Boomers

The benefits from massage and bodywork can help bodies of all ages, especially for baby boomers. 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 and bodywork offers, there also are proven psychological changes we experience with massage. 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 you've got a process that experts say is incredibly healing.

Aging, obviously, is a process none of us can avoid. As Benjamin Franklin said, "When you're finished changing, you're finished." Turn the inevitability of aging into a positive process of change and let massage and bodywork help you along the journey.



The aches and pains that often accompany the aging process can be managed with bodywork.

# Cultivating a Gardening Habit

## Discover the Health Benefits of Yard Work

Feeling the need to exercise, clean up your diet, meditate? Want to be more creative, get out and meet people, enjoy the outdoors, and slow down? There's one activity in which you can accomplish all of these objectives: gardening.

### ENCOURAGING EXERCISE

Studies show that vigorous digging burns 500 calories an hour, weeding burns 210 calories, and mowing the lawn burns 400 calories. As a moderate exercise, gardening has been found to decrease the risk of heart disease and diabetes, and a study at the University of Arkansas found that gardening was almost as effective as weight lifting in reducing the risk for osteoporosis in women. So instead of taking that indoor aerobics class this summer, try mowing the lawn or planting an herb garden.

As with any exercise regimen, the key is to start at a comfortable pace and gradually work your way up to longer, more difficult activities. Your heart rate should be about the same as when you

take a brisk walk.

### IMPROVING YOUR DIET

Gardening will also likely help you eat better. Research shows that people who grow gardens eat more vegetables and fruits than those who don't. Growing fresh herbs, even in a container on the deck or balcony, is another great way to add flavor and freshness to home-cooked meals and an incentive to try new recipes.

### BOOSTING YOUR SOCIAL LIFE

Gardening can also be quite social. Whether at a garden club, a community garden, or an online forum, people love to share ideas, solve common problems, and connect through mutual interests.

### EASING STRESS

And finally, gardening is a great way to manage stress. Spending time outside and tuning in to the rhythms of nature, we're reminded to be patient, slow down, and breathe the fresh air. Whether growing flowers, vegetables, or

herbs, a garden reminds us of our connection to life and the abundance that nature so freely gives.



Gardening burns calories and improves diet.

# Exercise Myths

## Fiction Vs. Fact

Although old fitness fictions like "no pain, no gain" are fading fast, plenty of misconceptions still exist. Following are some of the most common myths, counteracted by the latest research.

**FICTION:** YOU WILL BURN MORE FAT IF YOU EXERCISE LONGER AT A LOWER INTENSITY.

**FACT:** The most important focus in exercise and weight control is how many calories are burned during the activity. The faster you walk, step or run, the more calories you use per minute. However, high-intensity exercise may be more difficult to sustain.

**FICTION:** IF YOU'RE NOT GOING TO WORK OUT HARD AND OFTEN, EXERCISE IS A WASTE OF TIME.

**FACT:** Any exercise is better than none. For example, regular walking or

gardening for as little as an hour a week has been shown to reduce the risk of heart disease.

**FICTION:** IF YOU EXERCISE LONG AND HARD ENOUGH, YOU WILL ALWAYS GET THE RESULTS YOU WANT.

**FACT:** In reality, genetics plays an important role in how people respond to exercise. Your development of strength, speed, and endurance may be very different from that of other people you know.

**FICTION:** THE HEALTH AND FITNESS BENEFITS OF MIND-BODY EXERCISE LIKE T'AI CHI AND YOGA ARE QUESTIONABLE.

**FACT:** The benefits abound! T'ai Chi, for example, has been shown to help treat low-back pain and fibromyalgia. Improved flexibility, strength, and stress management are just some of the

benefits.

**FICTION:** HOME WORKOUTS ARE FINE, BUT GOING TO A GYM IS THE BEST WAY TO GET FIT.

**FACT:** Some people find it easier to stick to a home-based fitness program. In spite of all the hype on trendy exercise programs and facilities, the best program for you is the one you will participate in consistently.

This information was provided by IDEA, [www.ideafit.com](http://www.ideafit.com).

*Try to be a  
rainbow in  
someone's cloud.*

-Maya Angelou

I hope this beautiful spring day finds you happy and well! I am reminded of the saying April Showers bring May flowers and so I continue to hope for more rain! Even though March came and went like a lamb, I did get time outside to enjoy it.

We all know that getting older is inevitable; it is how we handle it that matters. The article "Age is a State of Mind" looks at how massage can improve our overall health and wellness by reducing pain, improving circulation and reducing stress. It is also proven to assist in reducing recovery time for injury or surgery.

As many of you know I truly enjoy gardening. I find getting my hands in the dirt if very grounding. In "Cultivating a Gardening Habit" we look at the overall benefits of getting out there and planting some flowers.

"Exercise Myths" is a great article that reminds me it is better to be consistent with a light workout than overdoing it once in a while! I have been training for my first 25 mile charity bike ride this month. It has been very rewarding to work my way up to a 25 mile ride. I will be posting some photos from the event on my Joe Linn Massage Facebook page!

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## Joe Linn Massage

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