

The Therapeutic Benefits of Massage

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ADVOCATE GOOD SHEPHERD HOSPITAL
HEALTH & FITNESS CENTER

The Spa at Advocate Good Shepherd Health & Fitness Center recognizes and embraces the positive benefits of Massage Therapy.

We have been offering massage services to the public for the 18 years, and are proud to say we have six certified, skilled, and licensed massage therapists that offer massage seven days per week. Our clients vary from athletes looking for a faster recovery to those managing chronic pain through multiple modalities, including massage. Here are the three most of common reasons why people visit us for massage.

REDUCING BOTH PHYSICAL AND MENTAL STRESS

Many of our clients have high-stress careers and lifestyles and benefit from the reduction of both physical and mental stress from their massage therapy appointments. When the body is tense and under stress, it produces unhealthy levels of the stress hormone, cortisol. Elevated levels of cortisol can contribute to trouble sleeping, weight gain, digestive problems, and headaches. Massage therapy has been shown to decrease cortisol levels, enabling the body to enter a recovery mode.

Clients who experience anxiety have also found regular massage therapy helps decrease feelings of worries, tension, fears, insomnia, dry mouth, and restlessness. Massage therapy also triggers lasting feelings of relaxation, improved mood, and reduces stress levels. Regular massage sessions over a prolonged period of time can boost energy levels, reduce pain, and benefit individuals on both physical and emotional levels.

PAIN REDUCTION AND MANAGEMENT

Massage is a natural treatment method that benefits both chronic and acute pain. When someone experiences pain, it causes stiffness, soreness, or muscle spasms. This puts your body into a cycle where the initial area of pain causes the surrounding muscles to spasm or become tight, as well causing this pain or discomfort to spread to a larger area. Massage is a proven technique to help address the pain by helping the body to relax those tight muscles.



The Advocate Good Shepherd Hospital Health & Fitness Center Spa's Massage Therapists join (in back) Tracy Hughes, Spa Coordinator, Mark Henrichs, Fitness Manager, and Facility Director Jen Frey.

Tracy Hughes works in Advocate Good Shepherd Hospital's Health and Fitness Center and Spa located at 1301 S. Barrington Road in Barrington. She may be reached at 847-620-4560.

IMPROVE CIRCULATION TO PROMOTE RECOVERY

Improved circulation is an additional benefit that occurs in the body as a result of receiving massage therapy on a consistent basis. This is because proper circulation brings damaged, stiff, and tense muscles the rich blood supply they need to promote healing.

Massage also promotes improved circulation via the use of hands-on pressure, which moves the blood through the congested and damaged areas of the body. In turn, the release of this same pressure causes new blood to flow into tissues of tense muscles. The squeezing, twisting, and pulling action of the massage also removes lactic acid from the muscle tissues. As a result, this improves the lymph fluid circulation, which carries metabolic waste products away from internal organs and muscles. This then lowers blood pressure levels and improves overall body function.

Many of our spa clients are competitive athletes. Our massage therapy helps to enhance

performance, conditioning, faster muscle recovery, injury prevention, and maintaining peak fitness. One of our clients commented, "I love the benefits of a weekly massage. It forces me to take a rest day and really allow my body time to heal physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Rest equals healing and the ability to come back stronger and with a clearer mind and attitude. All the therapists at the club are gifted and really want their clients to be their best. They are part of the key people on our team that get us to our top performance."

What used to be considered an alternative approach, massage therapy is now much more popular and mainstream for prevention and remedy. This form of therapy involves hands-on techniques to reduce stress, relieve anxiety, improve sleep, increase circulation, relieve tension and promote relaxation throughout the entire body, as well as many other benefits.