

Stress Release



Background

Stress is something we experience as we adjust to our continually changing environment; it can be both positive and negative.

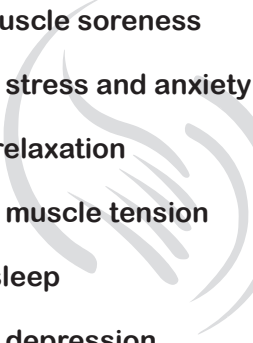
Positive stress can encourage action, and raise our awareness and excitement. Negative stress can cause feelings of anxiety, depression, create sleep loss, anger, high blood pressure and other medical problems.

Massage therapy can help reduce the negative outcomes of stress and help to induce relaxation.

Stress Release

Treatment

REGISTERED MASSAGE THERAPISTS MAY HELP:

- reduce muscle soreness
 - decrease stress and anxiety
 - promote relaxation
 - decrease muscle tension
 - improve sleep
 - decrease depression
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Research

Stress hormone is reduced by massage therapy

In this article the positive effects of massage therapy on biochemistry are reviewed including decreased levels of cortisol and increased levels of serotonin and dopamine. Research reviewed included studies on depression (including sex abuse and eating disorder studies), pain syndrome studies, research on auto-immune conditions (including asthma and chronic fatigue), immune studies (including HIV and breast cancer), and studies on the reduction of stress on the job, the stress of aging, and pregnancy stress. (Field T, Hernandez-Reif M, Diego M, Schuanberg S, Kuhn C. *Int. J Neurosci.* Oct:115(10):1397-413).

Less pain, depression, anxiety and improved sleep with reduced lower back pain and range of motion

The massage therapy group, as compared to the relaxation group, suffering from low back pain, reported experiencing less pain, depression, anxiety and improved sleep. They also showed improved trunk and pain flexion performance, and their serotonin and dopamine levels were higher. (Hernandez-Reif M, Field T, Krasnegor J, Theakston H. *Int. J Neurosci* 2001: 106(3-4):131-45).

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