

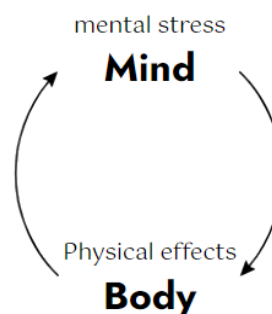
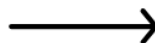
Mental Health and how Massage therapy can help

Mental Health disorders such as: Anxiety, depression, addiction, ADHD, bipolar disorder, Autism, eating disorders, trauma and stressor related disorders all affect the body by placing stress on the body. Worries about money, relationships, responsibilities, career etc also place stress on the body.

- Muscles of the back, shoulders, neck and face, jaw and arms may hold too much tension. This can create pain and headaches
- Sleep and digestion can become disrupted
- We may also lose our ability to focus and our moods can become unstable
- Our breathing can become apical (shallow)
- Ongoing stress can lead to long term problems such as high blood pressure, chronic pain and decreased immune function



Massage can help with the mind-body connection



Learning to relax, let go and heal

When we are stressed, we are engaging our sympathetic (fight and flight) nervous system. This leads to apical (shallow) breathing, increased heart rate, vasoconstriction of blood vessels in skin and abdomen, high blood pressure and decreased digestion.

Massage engages the parasympathetic nervous system (rest and digest), reversing the sympathetic nervous system effects on the body by reducing the heart rate and blood pressure, causing vasodilation and allowing for better digestion and relaxation.

Reduce muscle tension, pain and improve mobility

Massage therapy reduces the tension in the muscles by removing adhesions (knots) and trigger points (knots that refer pain) and by removing waste products

Muscles will realign to how they should be and this will reduce pain, correct posture and allow for joints to move more freely

Less pain and better mobility means you will feel better in your work and your play. This leads to better performance and improved mood

Improve breathing and posture

Your massage therapist will do a full assessment to be able to provide you with the best treatment that will have you feeling good but also help with your condition and how it is affecting your body

Diaphragmatic breathing will allow you to take in more oxygen and learn to relax, reducing pain and stress

Massage will address tension in muscles that lead to poor posture and will further reduce pain

Exercise and self-care advice

Your massage therapist will provide you with exercises you can do at home to help with your condition. This will help you with your pain and tension and mobility and prevent future problems

You will also be given advice for self-care tips such as using heat or cold for therapy that will further help your condition

Some massage therapists can provide advice on the use of essential oils to help with pain, tension, headaches etc

Book with an RMT

A registered massage therapist is a medical professional that will help you with your pain and tension

- Full assessment and reassessment as needed
- A tailored treatment for your specific needs
- Use of hydrotherapy
- Advice on posture, exercise and self-care and breathing
- Specific treatment for conditions such as TMJ disorder, carpal tunnel syndrome, headaches, chronic pain, pregnancy pain, repetitive use injuries, tendonitis, abdominal massage etc
- Referral to other healthcare practitioners that may be able to provide you with further help

Helping yourself

There are many things you can do at home for yourself to further help the effects of stress on the body

You can get advice from your RMT, your physician, self-help books etc

- Self massage
- Exercise
- Relaxation techniques
- Breathing exercises
- The use of heat or cold for therapy as it applies to your condition

Help others

You can help your loved ones reduce stress and tension and improve their mental health

- Take a walk and lend a empathetic ear
- Go out and do something fun
- Teach them better breathing or relaxation techniques
- Do an exercise class together
- Show them some easy self massage techniques to do at home

Effects of stress on the body:

- Tension in the muscles of the neck - leading to headaches. Tension in lumbar area, causing low back pain
- TMJ syndrome, tooth grinding and jaw clenching. Can also cause headaches
- Apical breathing, shortness of breath, tense neck muscles, asthma attacks in those with asthma
- anxiety, depression and irritability panic attacks
- GI disorders such as constipation, diarrhea or irritable bowel syndrome, upset stomach or ulcers
- Weight gain or loss
- Skin eruptions such as eczema, acne and herpes simplex
- Insomnia
- Decreases immune response. Susceptible to colds and flu
- Chronic stress has been linked to rheumatoid arthritis, allergies, asthma, cancer, diabetes, gastrointestinal disorders, hormonal imbalances, atherosclerosis, hypertension and heart attacks



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