

Clinical Tips for Massage

March 2017

Member, Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals

Stretch Out

A few precautions can prevent future pain

Kelli Crosby

You brush your teeth daily because you don't want cavities or gum disease, right? Well, what do you do on a daily basis to prevent tension in your neck? Brushing your teeth offers you preventive dental care, but what if you could learn to be preventive with the rest of your body?

We all have bad daily habits we don't even notice until something starts to hurt. These bad habits are the root cause of many painful conditions. To help prevent pain, however, we can turn these bad habits into good habits that can be worked into our daily routine. Here is some general advice that can apply to almost every part of daily living.

Sit Up Straight.

Sit in a chair with your hands on your hips. Slouch. Feel how your hips roll back (if you're wearing jeans, you'll be sitting on your pockets). Now sit up straight by moving your pelvis forward and centering your weight over your pelvis and off your buttocks.

Sleep on Your Back or Side.

Sleeping on your stomach makes you twist your neck and body in order to breathe. This twisted position is terrible for your spine, especially for prolonged periods during sleep. Check your pillow and make sure it has a thickness that will support your neck in a position neutral to the rest of your spine. Try a

Most of us start out with a positive attitude and a plan to do our best.

-Marilu Henner



Even just a few minutes at work can help turn bad habits into good ones.

Don't Slouch.

Slouching puts strain on your neck and can give you a headache. Your head weighs roughly 10 pounds-about as much as a bowling ball. Your spine is designed to balance that bowling ball when you're in an upright posture. If you slouch, your muscles have to do more work to hold your head up, which makes your muscles tight and angry.

memory-foam contour pillow, especially if you are a side sleeper.

Bend with a Straight Spine.

Bending over with a curved back puts pressure on your disc material and strains the spine. The pressure created during incorrect bending can cause the

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discs to bulge and put pressure on spinal nerves. Your back was not made to lower and raise your body—that's what your buttocks, hips, and knees are for.

Stand with your knees shoulder-width apart and pretend you are going to lift a 50-pound box off the floor. If you are bending your knees and hips and using your legs to lower and raise your body weight, you are lifting correctly. Now, use the same technique to pick your shoes up off the floor. Think about a squatting movement when you need to lean forward, too—such as while washing your face in the sink. Let your hips and knees do the work.

Take Regular Stretch Breaks.

The muscles in your arms and hands get tight when you grip or pull. The muscles in your neck and shoulders get tight when you reach forward or away from your body. Give these muscles a break with a simple stretch.

It only takes 10 seconds to lengthen the tight tissue, which will take pressure off your joints and prevent chronic conditions like tendinitis and bursitis. Watch for opportunities to work in a brief stretch.

Undo Yourself.

Evaluate the position of your body during your daily activities and make sure you "undo" that position during the day. There is no way to teach a stretch for every single activity you do, but if you take the time to reverse the position of the joint and stretch in the opposite direction, you will lengthen tight tissue and reduce repetitive strain on joints.

Tips to Save Your Body

Replacing bad habits with good ones takes time and thought, but the effort is well worth it. Here are some helpful tips to keep you on track.

-- If you keep waking up on your stomach, wear a pair of gym shorts to bed and put a golf ball in each pocket. When you roll onto your stomach, the golf balls will wake you up and you can return to your back or side.

-- When unloading the dishwasher and getting laundry out of the machine, pose

like a tennis player waiting for a serve. The knees are over your toes (but not beyond the toes), buttocks are backward, and shoulders are forward.

-- Don't try to carve out 30 minutes daily for a stretching routine. If you stretch regularly throughout the day, you will be more effective at keeping tissue loose. Remember, it only takes 10 seconds to stretch a muscle—so find those seconds during your day and make the most of them.

-- Think about stretching the same way you think about hydration. Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink water; by then you're already dehydrated. If you wait until something hurts before you stretch, you could develop chronic tension that can lead to everything from a headache to tendinitis.

A daily stretching routine will help

prevent future issues and address current ones. Don't wait until it's a problem. Start stretching today and, little by little, your body will thank you.

Kelli Crosby is the author of How to Think Like a Physical Therapist in Your Everyday Life. She graduated in 1999 from the University of North Florida and completed her specialty certification in orthopedic manipulative therapy in 2006.



Stretching for 10 seconds can take pressure off your joints and help relieve pain.

No Pain, No Gain?

Bodywork Doesn't Have to Hurt to be Effective

Cathy Ulrich

Some people believe massage must be painful to be effective. While some modalities may be intense, this doesn't necessarily translate to a knuckle-biting experience. In fact, painful bodywork can be counterproductive. If you can't breathe comfortably, want to tighten up, make a face, or curl your toes, the technique is too much for you. Your body will go into a protective mode and actually block any positive change.

"No pain, no gain" just doesn't have to apply when it comes to bodywork. Be sure to provide feedback to your practitioner so that you're on the same page. Think of it as a "scale of intensity." On my scale, zero is not touching you and ten is pain--not the worst pain you've ever felt but the place where you want to hold your breath, tighten up, make a face, leave your body. That's a ten.

You shouldn't ever have to be in a pain range to get results, and be sure to let your practitioner know if you're in an

eight or nine range. They may stay at that level if that's where the therapeutic value will be attained, but again, only if it's manageable and you're not tightening up.

And every single client is different. Not only do individuals all start in different places, but their bodies respond differently, and their pain thresholds are extremely varied. What one person finds heavenly, another calls torture.

If it does feel too painful, be sure to tell your therapist. Usually, a practitioner can simply slow down to ease the intensity without losing therapeutic value. Sometimes, if you are nervous or stressed, just remembering to breathe will make your body more open, and you'll remain comfortable.

Bodywork needn't be a test of how tough you are. By giving your therapist appropriate feedback and understanding that painful techniques aren't really helping your body heal, you'll have a

great experience in the session and feel better afterward.



Therapeutic massage actually feels good.

Coenzyme Q10

The Wrinkle Cure

Air pollutants, toxins, cigarette smoke, cell metabolism, exposure to the sun, and other environmental factors initiate free radicals, which can cause dangerous reactions that destroy cells and damage DNA, proteins, and fats. Free radicals also interfere with collagen production and integrity, resulting in loss of elasticity and, ultimately, aging skin. Although this is a natural and unavoidable by-product of metabolism, an overabundance of free radical damage can cause premature aging and wrinkles. Fortunately, there's a nutritional way to fight the elements.

Coenzyme Q10, also called CoQ10 and ubiquinone, is a fat soluble, vitamin-like nutrient present in virtually all cells and considered the spark plug of the body, helping to produce and regulate energy as well as

fighting free radicals as an antioxidant.

CoQ10 levels are highest during the first 20 years of life and decline with time, so much so that at age 80, CoQ10 levels may be lower than at birth. Yet the body's demand for CoQ10 increases with age. Furthermore, statin (cholesterol-lowering) medications can further deplete the body of CoQ10.

The recommended daily CoQ10 dose is 30 mg, in combination with alpha lipoic acid and vitamins A, C, E, and selenium. Foods highest in CoQ10 include sardines, beef, peanuts, spinach, and albacore tuna. However, it would take a pound of sardines, two pounds of beef, or two-and-a-half pounds of peanuts to provide 30 mg, and cooking foods at high temperatures degrades the enzyme. Consequently,

CoQ10 supplementation is likely necessary to achieve therapeutic effects.

CoQ10 can also benefit topically, as it's a small molecule that can easily penetrate the skin. When CoQ10 is combined with vitamins C and E in creams or lotions, the synergistic effect can neutralize free radicals, thus reducing wrinkles.

Supplementing with CoQ10 is not only a good antiaging strategy for the skin, it can also enhance energy, cognition, heart health, stroke prevention, and immune support.

*Every day is a
new day, and
you'll never be
able to find
happiness if you
don't move on.*

-Carrie Underwood

Having new clients come in is always an enlightening experience. We find out things about other places and other practitioners. One of our European guests commented that the hands on practitioners here in the states seemed to have a sham going on. They observed that their therapist had them coming in several times a week for several weeks without much of a result while telling them to just give it time.

Let us take a moment to clear this up in this newsletter. Our treatments are based on current research and are designed for particular outcomes. We do not add on a charge for each of these treatment enhancers, we believe that you pay for our time and our knowledge. Our policy is that if we are unsuccessful in securing a noticeable improvement in regard to pain and motion we help you find a healthcare provider with more knowledge and training. We will always accept wellness and maintenance massage appointments if you are not seeking an improvement goal.

NOTE: Life Extensions has CoQ10 with d-limonene 100mg 100each on sale for \$18.40 if that makes sense for you, just give us a call.

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