

# A SHOW OF HANDS

Summer 2015

Member, Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals

## Bodywork & Exercise

### Increase Body Awareness While Increasing Your Activity

Ruth Werner

You have to give us credit: as a culture, Americans are incredibly interested in getting fit. We invest every year in new diets, exercise programs, and supplements for weight loss and improved energy. Low-range estimates suggest that Americans spend about \$2.6 billion each year on gym memberships alone.

We also tend to pitch full speed into any given commitment. If we're going to get fit, by golly, we're going to do it now, regardless of how long it took us to get into our current state. We don't do things by half measures, and moderation is not in our nature. So how do we keep ourselves injury-free while honoring our commitment to exercise and get healthy?

sports field seems to appeal to our competitive spirit--especially when we're surrounded by others who all seem to be doing better than we are. Combine this kind of human drive with poorly trained athletic trainers who give bad advice about form, pacing, and effort, and we have a recipe for potential problems.

Exercise is only effective when it occurs without injury. Any new exercise program requires some caution, even if it is comparatively easygoing. And more challenging programs are safest and most successful when new participants build up their activity levels carefully and receive excellent guidance about form.

#### WHEN IT GOES WRONG

We accrue musculoskeletal and fascial

*Be yourself;  
everyone else is  
already taken.*

-Oscar Wilde



Moderation is key when beginning a new exercise program

#### DOES IT HAVE TO BE ALL OR NOTHING?

We all know that starting an exercise program doesn't actually mean we'll finish it. When we throw ourselves into an ambitious new routine, we are likely to overdo it and get hurt. Then, we get discouraged, and may give up entirely, only to start the cycle over in another year or so.

Overdoing things in the gym or on the

injuries throughout our entire lifespans. In the best circumstances, they heal well, with a minimum of internal scar tissue, and function returns to practically normal levels. When things are ideal, that sprained ankle you got playing soccer at age 12 doesn't affect your ability to walk in your 30s. The lumbar

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#### Office Hours and Contact

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strain you got from picking up the heavy laundry basket 15 years ago resolved well, so at 62, it won't hinder your golf game. We are able to adapt to minor injuries, and we learn how not to exacerbate them.

But when we introduce a new exercise program, especially if that exercise program is more demanding, or demanding in different ways than we have experienced before, we risk the flaring up of old injuries. Scar tissue does not have the weight-bearing capacity of healthy muscle or connective tissue. This is when that old sprained ankle may make itself known, and that weakness in your back will definitely have opinions about your new routine. Sometimes you might feel like your new commitment to fitness was not the best idea.

#### INJURIES CAN HAPPEN ANY TIME

CrossFit is one program that gets a lot of attention because of its reputation for being especially demanding. But any type of exercise can lead to injury if correct form is not observed. Zumba, Jazzercise, and other dance-like programs bring a risk of foot and leg injuries, including sprained ankles, plantar fasciitis, and stress fractures, because the risk for twisting at the knee is so high.

If you aren't paying close attention to your own limits, even yoga can be a source of soft-tissue injury: delayed soreness, problems at the neck and sacroiliac joints, or other injuries. One massage therapist reported seeing several injuries related to a prolonged yoga headstand, probably in a student who was not ready for this challenge.

#### HOW CAN MASSAGE HELP?

Massage can help you deal with pain or soreness from your exercise regimen and can also help shorten recovery periods so you can train more efficiently. Although massage therapists are not primary care providers, and cannot diagnose conditions or prescribe specific treatments, your therapist may be able to offer excellent advice for dealing with a fitness-related injury. He or she may also have suggestions about warm-ups, cool-downs, and postexercise stretching, or be able to point you to an appropriate coach or other professional for specific exercise needs and to help prevent future injury.

The incidence of exercise-related injury

has a lot to do with people not paying attention to their own needs. One of the many things massage therapy offers to people who want to become healthier and more fit is the chance to become more aware of your own body in a powerfully positive way. Increased body awareness and self-appreciation may be the best tools for helping you increase activity levels without hurting yourself. In this way, you can reach your goals with power and joy, rather than with pain and injury.

*Ruth Werner is a former massage therapist, a writer, and a continuing education provider. She wrote A Massage Therapist's Guide to Pathology (Lippincott Williams + Wilkins, 2013).*



Massage can get you back on track following an exercise-related injury

# Afternoon Essential Oils

Jeanne Rose

It's easy to enjoy the benefits of aromatherapy, even when you're not in the therapy room. Here are some ways to incorporate facets of aromatherapy into your daily routine, and even into your lunchtime!

Consider having a protein-filled lunch of 4 ounces of chicken breast mixed with salad. Make sure your salad includes at least six red and green items combined, such as cucumber, lettuce, tomatoes, carrots, bell peppers, and radishes. Add chopped basil, sage, or sweet marjoram. Make a simple dressing of olive oil and lemon juice. Add culinary essential oils such as dill weed and black pepper. Have a glass of aromatic iced herbal tea, and add to it 1 teaspoon of melissa hydrosol. This is tasty and encourages deep thinking and relaxation. If, however, you need to continue your workday, then add 1 teaspoon of rosemary hydrosol to your lunchtime iced tea.

Why not take a five-minute scented breather for an afternoon break. The

aromatic properties of plants are effective tonics and energizers. Dabbing the temples with essential oils or spraying the nape of the neck with hydrosols of rosemary or peppermint is a wonderful way to implement the potent effects of these distilled plant materials. You can also use a mixture of distilled water with essential oils of peppermint, sage, and basil dissolved in alcohol (10 drops essential oil, 20 drops alcohol, and a half-ounce of water). Basil and peppermint herb, and their essential oils, have been used for centuries as a mental stimulant.

Complete your afternoon break by lying down for 3-5 minutes with a couple of slices of fresh cucumber on the eyes. Cucumber contains enzymes that help soften the skin. If the day's work has brought on a headache, a drop of rosemary oil to the temples or around the ears works wonders.

Jeanne Rose has been teaching and researching natural remedies for 30 years, beginning with her

first book, *Herbs Things*.



**Find out which essential oil works best for you.**

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## Healthy Grilling Tips

Summertime and grills go together like a hot dog and mustard. But could that hot dog actually be doing you harm? Alice Bender, registered dietician at the American Institute for Cancer, says that diets high in beef, pork, and lamb, as well as processed meats like hot dogs, are linked to an increased risk of colon cancer. She suggests that sticking with chicken and fish can "make this summer's backyard grilling both healthier and more flavorful." Use herbs and spices to amp up flavor, and try marinating for 30 minutes before you grill, which can reduce the amount of heterocyclic amines--the potentially cancer-causing compounds formed when grilling.

Here are some other tips to help reduce health risks associated with the grill:

### TRIM THE FAT

Fat can increase smoke, which may contain carcinogens, so choose leaner meats and trim excess fat.

### DON'T BURN IT

Charred, well-done meat can increase your risk of pancreatic cancer, according to a study from the University of Minnesota.

### BUT COOK IT THROUGH

Make sure that you hit the USDA recommendations for internal temperature, which can be found at [www.foodsafety.gov](http://www.foodsafety.gov).

### MORE VEGGIES!

Grilling vegetables does not create the same heterocyclic amines as grilling meats. Plus, veggies have less fat and cholesterol in general.

### KEEP IT CLEAN

Don't let a charred mess build up on your grill, because it will eventually find its way onto your food.

*Thankfully,  
persistence is a  
great substitute  
for talent.*

-Steve Martin

Welcome to "MESSAGE U."

Today's Subject: Smile and the World will Smile Back

In today's ever critical world, it is very easy to criticize someone or something that doesn't fit our goals or expectations. So the next time you're faced with a negative moment, pause and find the goodness within. Share a compliment and watch as not only you smile but the world starts to smile back. Stress and blood pressure are reduced while increasing dopamine levels which = mass happiness!

Note: The preceding information is not medical advice. Please check with your doctor prior to starting any new exercise or nutrition plan - especially if currently under a doctor's care or if you have any pre-existing medical condition(s).

For more information, please visit our website at:  
[www.handnhand.biz](http://www.handnhand.biz).

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