

The Courtyard Clinic

Physical
Health



Osteopathy/Physiotherapy Sports & Remedial Massage

- Back, Neck & Shoulder pain
- Joint & Muscle Injuries
- Headaches
- Arthritis
- Rib Pain
- Sports Injuries

Podiatry/Chiropody

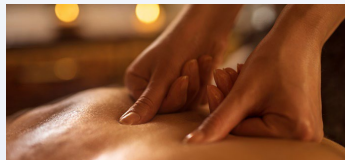
- Toenail Problems
- Corns & Callouses
- Verrucae
- Diabetic Foot Checks
- Foot Odour
- Footwear Advice



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<https://mailchi.mp/osteopathmaldon/sign-up>

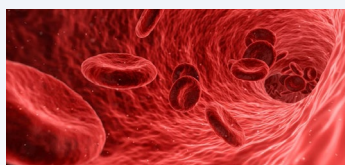
Massage Therapy is one of the types of treatment we offer at The Courtyard Clinic. People can sometimes be unclear about which type of therapy is right for their condition so this month we are going to discuss the effects of Massage and how it works.

Relaxation



Massage induces what is known as the 'parasympathetic response'. The parasympathetic system is a branch of the nervous system responsible for the 'rest-and-digest' activities that occur when the body is at rest (especially after eating). These include salivation, lacrimation (tears), urination, digestion and defecation. The parasympathetic nervous system is one of three divisions of the autonomic nervous system (automatic responses). It conserves energy as it slows the heart rate, increases intestinal and gland activity, and relaxes sphincter muscles in the gastrointestinal tract. This is why stress and anxiety can have a negative effect on our digestion. Massage also stimulates the release of chemicals known as endorphins that help us feel happy and relaxed. For instance, one of these is dopamine which is known as our 'reward hormone' and is also released when we do something good or achieve something.

Circulation



Massage can also influence our circulatory system (blood flow). Our body prioritises how much blood is sent to where through

How Massage Works

the constriction and dilation of blood vessels. Our smallest blood vessels are known as capillaries. Massage can help stimulate the flow of blood through a capillary, this increases the nutrients delivered to, and the waste taken away from the body tissue that is being worked on.

Musculoskeletal Health

One of the most common reasons a person might seek help from a massage therapist is muscular aches and pains. Massage helps in enhancing circulation to and from the muscles. This increases their nutrient supply and reduces waste accumulation. This is also true of joints and joint cartilages which will benefit when the surrounding tissues are massaged.



When a muscle works, even under ordinary circumstances, tiny tears occur. This is a normal part of the muscles function and they will usually heal without any problem. When a muscle is under chronic tension or strain, these tiny tears can heal improperly, and scarring can occur. This can make the muscle fibres more fibrous and create a stringy texture to the touch. Improper healing can create adhesions between the fibres, reducing strength and flexibility. The muscle becomes uncomfortable and more prone to injury. Massage helps reduce this by breaking down these adhesions and stimulating the circulation so that the muscles can heal properly and function efficiently. The increase in circulation also helps the muscle to lubricate itself thereby increasing flexibility.

Massage can also be beneficial as a natural painkiller. It is very common for people to instinctively rub or massage an area when experiencing pain or discomfort (think of a time where you might have banged your knee or elbow). The nerves that carry the sensation of the rubbing travel faster than the nerves that carry sensations of dull aching pain, therefore the brain pays it more attention. Massage also warms and brings blood flow into the sore area, as well as stretching and improving the range of motion.

Waste/Drainage

Sometimes you might read of clinics and spa's offering 'detox' massage. This term can be a little misleading and is physiologically a bit inaccurate, however massage can certainly help the body remove waste products from certain tissues. As cells in the body go about their normal function, they produce waste in the same way an engine makes exhaust. These waste products must be removed from the body. This is done through organs like the liver and kidneys filtering and breaking down waste from the blood before it is expelled when we go to the toilet. Sometimes the waste from the cells can build up in an area where movement, flexibility and circulation are impaired. The waste should be removed by the venous (part of the circulatory system made up of the veins) and lymphatic (tubes that remove waste from tissues and play a role in immunity) vessels but mobility issues, illness and injury can sometimes leave these systems a bit sluggish. Massage mechanically increases venous and lymphatic flow, helping clear wastes and by-products from tissues and helping to repair damage and reduce inflammation. Good flow of lymphatic fluid is also crucial for the efficient function of the immune system.

If you have any questions about how massage, or to book an appointment with Massage Therapist, Wendy David, please get in touch.

The Courtyard Clinic - Osteopathy, Physiotherapy, Massage Therapy, Podiatry/Chiropody



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