

Therapeutic sports massage helps the body recover from the stresses of strenuous exercise and facilitates the rebuilding phase of conditioning. The physiological benefits of sports massage include improved blood and lymph circulation, muscle relaxation, and general relaxation. These, in turn, lead to removal of waste products and better cell nutrition, normalization and greater elasticity of tissues, deactivation of trigger points, and faster healing of injuries. It all adds up to relief from soreness and stiffness, better flexibility, and less potential for future injury.

In addition to general recovery, sports massage may also focus on specific muscles used in a sport or fitness activity. For example, areas of greater stress for runners and dancers are in the legs, for swimmers in the upper body, for tennis players in the arms. These areas are more likely to be tight, lose flexibility, and develop trigger points.

Adequate recovery is also a major factor in avoiding the over-training syndrome. Over-training is characterized by irritability, apathy, altered appetite, increased frequency of injury, increased resting heart rate, and/or insomnia. It occurs when the body is not allowed to recover adequately between bouts of heavy exercise. Therapeutic massage helps you avoid over-training by facilitating recovery through general relaxation, and its other physiological effects.

You may also have your own unique trouble spots, perhaps from past injuries. A massage therapist can pay special attention to these areas, monitor them for developing problems, and help keep them in good condition. An experienced massage therapist can also compliment treatment received from other health care professionals for various injuries.

An effective maintenance program is based on the massage therapist's understanding of anatomy and kinesiology, combined with an expert knowledge of which muscles are used in a given sport and which are likely candidates for trouble. By zeroing in on particular muscle groups and working specific tissues, the sports massage therapist can help the athlete maintain or improve range of motion and muscle flexibility. The overall objective of a maintenance program is to help the athlete reach optimal performance through injury-free training.

Incorporating a regular program of sports massage in your conditioning program has many benefits. It can serve to:

- Improve circulation of blood and lymph which allows optimal metabolic exchange in muscles and other soft tissues of the body.
- Enhance recovery from intense training and performance.
- Decrease delayed onset muscle soreness associated with new or extreme physical activity
- Reduce the potential for injury by identifying and addressing minor, sub-clinical musculoskeletal concerns before they develop into injuries
- Enhance body awareness
- Relieve Pain, Stiffness, Tension, Anxiety and Stress in the body
- Increase Mental Awareness and Decrease Pain through release of endorphins
- Release of toxins and waste products in the muscles brought on by the cumulative stress of everyday training and competing
- Prevent injuries and recover from injuries at a much faster rate.
- Remove trigger points, muscle adhesions, and soften scar tissue formed as a result of injury
- Relax and stretch muscles
- Improve range of motion Restore suppleness and elasticity Relax the body and mind