

Self-Massage Techniques to Relieve Stress

Benefits of Massage

Almost anyone - from infants to seniors - can enjoy the benefits of a good massage.

- ★ Reduces stress and anxiety
- ★ Promotes relaxation
- ★ Improves circulation
- ★ Relieves general body tension
- ★ Relieves aches and muscle stiffness
- ★ Improves muscle tone
- ★ Removes toxins from the muscles
- ★ Improves flexibility in muscles and joints
- ★ Improves immune system
- ★ Improves digestion and elimination
- ★ Promotes healthy skin
- ★ Massage Feels Great!

Techniques YOU Can Use at Home

Who has not felt the effects of a stressful day in the muscles of the neck or back?

Massage is one way to help smooth away the pain and headache resulting from tensed muscles. Massage also helps increase oxygen and blood flow to the area and soothes the nerves, sending calming signals to the brain. And it feels so good!

Try massaging these three tension areas of the body: neck, lower back and feet. Use massage oil or lotion if you like, for a smoother massage. Avoid exerting heavy pressure on the spinal column or other bony areas.

NECK:

Do this exercise sitting upright in your chair or lying on the floor on your back, feet flat on the floor, knees bent.

1. Using your right hand on your left shoulder, work your fingers gently but firmly, beginning with your shoulder blade, moving up toward the neck and including the scalp. For best

effect, repeat each stroke three or four times. Repeat on the other side, using your left hand.

2. Massage the thick, muscular part of your shoulder at the base of your neck, using a circular motion and gradually increasing the pressure. Use the right hand for the left shoulder and the left hand for the right shoulder.
3. Finish by gently and rapidly rubbing your scalp as though giving yourself a shampoo.

LOWER BACK:

You'll need a partner for this. The massage receiver lies on the floor or bed face down, with a pillow under the head and a pillow placed lengthwise under the chest. The giver rubs the receiver's lower back in circles on either side of the spine, moving up and down the spine and then outward to the hips. Pressure can be increased by using the thumbs and leaning into each stroke.

FEET:

Sit on a chair or on the floor.

1. Rest one foot on the opposite thigh. Rub the full length of your foot, from the heel to the toes and back, with your thumbs. Repeat several times.
2. Wrap your fingers around the top of your foot and your thumbs around the bottom. Squeeze with your thumbs, starting at the arch and moving up to the toes. Repeat several times.
3. Take each toe between your fingers and gently roll it back and forth. Rub the area between the toes.
4. Supporting your ankle in one hand and your toes in the other, rotate your foot first in one direction, then in the other.



This rejuvenating 20-minute back, neck, arms and shoulder massage will leave you feeling invigorated, refreshed and energized. The massage treatment has been designed to reduce the build up of tension in the neck and shoulder regions.

