



Staying in Touch®

Happy New Year!

Going into this new year feels more hopeful than the last couple of years, doesn't it?

Maybe the best thing about New Years is having the opportunity to take stock of where we are currently and considering how to occupy our days in the coming months.

Whatever your plans for the coming year, taking steps to maintain your best level of health can enhance every aspect of your life. Everything goes a little better when you're feeling your best!

Most things that can improve your health take commitment to yield results: things like getting regular exercise and improving your diet. Maybe the easiest choice you can make is to get regular massages. As study after study shows, it's one of the most effective ways to support overall health.

This month's lead article takes a look at the massage benefits that inspire athletes to get regular massages, while the second article reminds us that having a strong purpose can help us to live longer.

Take care of yourself; see you soon at your next appointment!

Why Do Professional Athletes Swear by Massage?

The vast majority of elite athletes hailing from a wide array of sports (from American football to tennis) receive complementary therapies to improve their performance and prevent injury. The Philadelphia Eagles, for instance, ensures that athletes ... recover between games with massage, compression therapy, and exercise bikes, while tennis star, Venus Williams, has always espoused the importance of holistic medicine. Of the many therapies being embraced by top teams and athletes, one of the most universal is massage.

Massage Aids in Recovery After Exercise— Research conducted at Ohio State University has shown that therapeutic massage can accelerate the recovery period after a sports injury. ...[W]hen muscles are compressed after intense exercise, swelling and muscle damage are reduced. For athletes, sports and Swedish massages are two top choices, as they include kneading, friction, and other techniques. ...

Massage Battles Inflammation and Promotes the Growth of New Mitochondria—

Research by scientists from the Buck Institute for Research on Aging and McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario has shown how massage benefits the body on a cellular level. This therapy battles inflammation and promotes the proliferation of mitochondria (the "powerhouse" or "battery" of cells) in skeletal muscle. The researchers concluded that massage is a useful tool for athletes in recovery from musculoskeletal injuries.

Massage Is a Powerful Stress Buster— Stress can stand in the way of an athlete's success, harming their mental game and increasing their risk of experiencing an injury.

(See **Athletes and Massage...** on back page)

People with stronger sense of purpose in life live longer, study suggests

by John Anderer

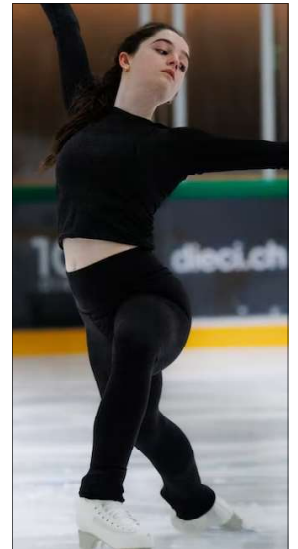
Finding a reason to get out of bed every morning can help us avoid the grave, according to fascinating new work from Boston University. Researchers report that people with higher levels of purpose in life may have a lower risk of death from any cause. ...

Defined as, *the extent to which someone perceives a sense of direction and goals in their life*, "purpose" has been linked to numerous health benefits in recent years. That includes improved physical functioning, lower risk of cardiovascular disease, and a lower risk of cognitive decline.

"Having a purpose in life has been known to improve many health outcomes on average," says study lead author Dr. Koichiro Shiba, assistant professor of epidemiology at BUSPH, in a media release. ...

Dr. Shiba and colleagues at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health used data from a nationally representative study of U.S. adults ages 50 and older to conduct this

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Sense of Purpose ...

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research. Study authors analyzed self-reported sense of purpose among over 13,000 participants. ...

Overall, people with the highest sense of purpose displayed the lowest risk of death (15.2%) in comparison to others with the lowest observed sense of purpose (36.5%). Researchers were also sure to collect relevant data pertaining to additional factors known to influence health like socioeconomic status, other demographic characteristics, baseline physical health, and depression. They discovered that an increase in these factors was also associated with increases in a higher sense of purpose. ...

Dr. Shiba concludes: "Even though people may view purpose as a 'psychological' factor, its impacts on health cannot be explained solely by processes that operate in our mind and biology. We need to consider how the psychological factor interacts with our social world and ultimately impacts our health."

The study is published in *Preventive Medicine*. **Source:** studyfinds.org

Athletes and Massage ... (Continued from front page)

Massage can help them keep stress levels down, while also soothing pain and tension. A 2020 study by University of Konstanz researchers showed that just ten minutes of massage can help induce relaxation. Another study by Cedars-Sinai Medical Center academics showed that people who have a massage experience significant changes in their body's immune and endocrine response (the action of the nervous system in response to danger in the environment). Athletes who are prone to chronic tension headaches, meanwhile, will be pleased to learn that a thirty-minute massage improves the psychological and physiological state of patients with tension headaches.

Athletes from across the gamut of sports praise the benefits of massage. Tom Brady ... took time to thank his doctors and therapists for enabling him to keep playing football for much longer than he could have otherwise. Studies have shown that there is a great reason why athletes like Roger Federer or the Williams sisters make massage a key part of their exercise recovery program. Massage helps the muscles heal faster. It also reduces inflammation and serves as a powerful stress buster. **Source:** cinsmedia.com

Valentine's Day is right around the corner. Make that special someone's day with a massage gift certificate! Call to order ...



It's a wonderful thing to be optimistic. It keeps you healthy and it keeps you resilient.

—Daniel Kahneman

The content of this newsletter is not intended to replace professional medical advice. If you're ill, please consult a physician.