

The Importance of Self-Care

CATEGORY Health | WRITTEN BY Bella Schneider



“Stop thinking of massage therapy as an indulgence,” cautions spa and beauty expert Bella Schneider, CEO of LaBelle Day Spas and Salons.

Perhaps it's because I work in the beauty and wellness industry, but I'm always surprised when people think of a massage as a treat rather than a necessary therapeutic practice. Just like a teeth cleaning or restorative yoga class, a regular massage should be considered an essential part of one's overall wellness routine. The fact that massages feel amazing should be the icing on the cake instead, and not the main reason for receiving one. Here are several mental and physical benefits of massage therapy.

Relieves Pain

A good rubdown not only feels good, it helps ease and diminish muscle pain. Kneading muscles after strenuous activity can decrease inflammation, improve blood flow, relieve soreness, and increase mobility. The inflammation associated with conditions outside of exercise, like anxiety, asthma, cardiovascular disease, digestive disorders, and depression are also real reasons to call your massage therapist.

Boosts the Immune System

Research indicates that massage therapy actually increases lymphocytes, the white blood cells that help protect the body from disease. According to the American Massage Therapy Association, “Researchers working with patients with compromised immune systems have found massage therapy can improve how the immune system functions. Those same benefits can translate to people seeking to fight off the common cold, flu, and other seasonal illnesses.”

Improves Well-Being

With the fast pace at which so many of us live our lives today, it's no wonder we're all stressed out. It's essential to take a regularly scheduled time out to escape those stressors and allow oneself to experience the sense of calm and relaxation that massage provides. Think of it as a reset button that needs to be pushed.

Bella Schneider Beauty Royal Rose Stem Cell Mask.

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Enhances Sleep

How a good night's sleep affects our mood, energy, and attentiveness is no big mystery. Regular, uninterrupted sleep is the best medicine, but achieving it isn't always as easy as putting your head down on the pillow at night. Because massage helps curtail physical tension and stress, it also helps improve the quality of our sleep. Studies prove that getting consistent zzz's reduces the chance of developing heart attacks and dementia. Massage also helps balance hormones in the body and reduces cortisol levels by 30%, which play a vital role in sleep patterns. Essentially, a one-hour massage rewards the body with the same benefits as a power nap.

And just how often should you get a massage?

It's important to pay attention to your physical and emotional needs when figuring out how often you should receive massage therapy. Booking a deep-tissue or Swedish-style massage once every few months is certainly relaxing, but it may not do much depending on the needs of your mind and body. Typically, once a week or two is ideal to maintain a state of relaxation and flexibility. It's always important to communicate with your therapist to figure out the best course of action.