

Therapeutic Massage by Lucy --Newsletter--

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Member, Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals

Healthy Aging and Your Skin

Trends and Treatments for Baby Boomers

With more than 70 million baby boomers in the United States poised to join the ranks of those aged 65 and older in coming years, this generation has embraced a new twist on aging gracefully. These individuals don't think of themselves as old, and in many respects, they are not, at least not in the same sense their parents were after they passed the 65-year mark.

A State of Mind

In addition to wanting to remain vital and active, boomers are increasingly expressing a desire to look as young as they feel. Many boomers are turning to minimally invasive procedures to avoid the downtime and drastic changes in

One of the first indicators of overall health and how gracefully someone is aging is the condition of someone's skin. Take the backs of the hands, for example. The increasingly noticeable and enlarging veins and so-called age spots are some of the first telltale signs of aging.

Vitality at Any Age

John Roseby, executive spa director at the famous Arizona-based spa, Canyon Ranch, says skin care, massage, and bodywork are part of their wellness philosophy.

"Health and vitality at any age is one of our core messages and one we believe in

Blessed is the season which engages the whole world in a conspiracy of love.

-Hamilton W. Mabie



Feeling fit and healthy--no matter what your age--contributes to a quality life.

appearance associated with plastic surgery. Almost miraculously, it's possible to look much younger than one's years, since modern health care is helping ward off life-shortening disease at a tremendous rate. The result is a growing population expected to live longer than any generation before and to look better doing it.

passionately," he says. "Regular skin care programs allow vibrant health to shine from deep within."

Anne Williams, esthetician and director of education at Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals, agrees and says a spa is an excellent place to

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treat the entire body. "Massage improves the appearance and condition of skin, and tones muscle tissue, thanks to improved local circulation."

With age and inactivity, circulation slows and skin becomes pale and cold. "Massage has a stimulating cellular function in the hypodermis, dermis, and epidermis," says Sharon Puszko, director of DayBreak Geriatric Massage Institute. "Touch nurtures, relaxes, and heals, as well as stimulates and activates."

Ultimately, Williams says, one of the greatest benefits of any type of skin care and bodywork treatment is the ability it gives you to reconnect. "You re-experience your body. When you're in your body, you own it in a different way. You care about it in a different way."

Skin's Graceful Aging

Proper skin care can help ward off signs of aging. Here are some healthful skin care tips for caring for maturing skin.

Protect Your Skin

The most important thing you can do for your skin, Williams says, is to consistently use sunscreen. Whether skiing the Colorado Rockies, swimming the Pacific Ocean, or just walking to your car for a lunch break, sunscreen should be a part of your daily routine, as sun damage is the number one cause of prematurely aged skin. Consider buying makeup or moisturizer with an SPF of 15 or higher to ensure constant protection. To protect you from the full range of ultraviolet rays, look for products containing at least one of these ingredients: avobenzone, titanium dioxide, or zinc oxide.

Keep it Moist

Depending on where you live, you may not give much credence to moisturizer use, but experts say it is a critical piece of the puzzle for great skin. Avoid traditional grocery store finds in favor of a more targeted moisturizing product, preferably one recommended by your esthetician. If you spend money on anything, Williams says, spend it on a good moisturizer. A gentle cleanser (no bar soap on the face, ever, she says) and an alcohol-free toner will round out a simple, yet effective skin care plan. In general, it's a good idea to stick with one

product line since products are usually designed to work together.

Don't Overdo It

In our zeal to clean our skin, we often overdo it. Just as you shouldn't exfoliate too often (no more than once a week), you should also avoid overscrubbing your face, even with just water and a washcloth. Your skin is fragile; treat it as such. It pays to leave the serious exfoliation to an expert esthetician and go gently on your skin at home.

Watch What You Eat

The healthier you eat, the better your skin will look. This means natural, unprocessed foods with high antioxidant and vitamin contents (in other words, fruits and vegetables). Strive to replace processed breads and cereals with whole-grain alternatives that contain fiber. Eliminate or go easy on caffeine and sugar. Many believe drinking plenty

of water will keep your skin hydrated and healthy.

Talk to the Experts

Williams says working with a skin care professional will help establish a good base of knowledge about how to care for your skin. Having an expert who knows you and your history will help address changes going forward. For example, if you change climates, your skin's needs will change as well. The same is true with the seasons.

The seasons of your life will bring yet more changes to your skin care needs. Talking to an expert will help guide you through those changes and give you proactive self-care steps. Growing older doesn't have to mean growing old.



An esthetician can help you determine noninvasive ways to maintain a healthy complexion.

Why Buy Organic?

Is the Higher Price Worth It?

While shopping in your grocery store's produce section, you may notice the organically grown apples are pocked and not as big and perfectly round as the conventional produce, but they are more expensive. What's the difference, and which do you choose? Your decision may significantly impact not only your health but the health of the planet and the economy.

DEFINING "ORGANIC"

Organic foods are derived from sustainable farming practices that maintain and replenish soil fertility without the use of toxic pesticides and fertilizers. These foods are minimally processed and do not include artificial ingredients or preservatives. On the other hand, conventional farms often rely heavily on pesticides, genetic modification, synthetic hormones, and antibiotics.

DOES IT REALLY MATTER?

To understand the fallout of conventional farming is to realize the argument for organics. Bob Scowcroft,

executive director of the Organic Farming Research Foundation, touches on the devastating consequences of pesticides. "DDT nearly eliminated the American eagle by affecting their ability to reproduce" he says. "Since World War II, we've introduced more than 9,000 chemicals into the environment. And we don't know the full impact on humans and different sized humans," he adds, alluding to studies revealing damaging effects on children.

When you buy organically certified foods, you're ensured they are free of pesticides, hormones, antibiotics, and genetic DNA modification.

"Organics are better for the environment, and it's an investment in the revitalization of rural America," Scowcroft says. Organic farms are usually smaller, family-owned farms contributing to the economy of struggling rural America, he explains. The organic choice may be a little more expensive, but it's an investment in your health and the future.



Organic foods are free of pesticide residue.

Massage for Seniors

Bodywork Improves Quality of Life

Almost 35 million Americans are age 65 or older, and about 2,000 more reach this age every day. As the U.S. demographic shifts to an older population, it's important to find ways of helping our elders maintain their health and vitality. Massage for seniors is gaining importance as an alternative therapy to increase quality of life, and many massage therapists are getting special training to better serve this growing population.

SENIORS' SPECIAL NEEDS

While similar in technique to other forms of massage, geriatric massage considers the special needs of the elderly. The specialty trained practitioner knows about positioning for greatest comfort and will often have

the client rest in the same position for the entire massage. Mobility challenges may dictate the massage be done in a bed or wheelchair. The therapist may also work both sides of the body at the same time to enhance body awareness, or only work hands and feet, if the client prefers. Sessions may be limited to 30 to 45 minutes, as older clients often do better with shorter, more frequent, massages.

The geriatric massage therapist is aware of health issues associated with aging and how to safely work with this type of client and with associated physicians. Consequently, the practitioner is able to individualize the massage service based on the client's health, mobility, and comfort level.

BENEFITS OF GERIATRIC MASSAGE

A recent study conducted at the Weaver's Tale Retreat Center in Oregon looked at the effects of massage for elderly clients. The results of the two-year study showed that participants experienced a decrease in breathing rate of 50 percent and an improvement in range of motion, posture, body awareness, skin color, and muscle tone. Furthermore, it is well documented that caring touch benefits emotional well-being in seniors -- a population at greater risk of suffering from depression.

Massage therapy can add to the quality of a senior's life, both physically and emotionally. Consider booking a session for someone you love, and make a difference in their life.

*Remember
there's no such
thing as a small
act of kindness.
Every act creates
a ripple with no
logical end.*

--Scott Adams

Hello, Happy Holidays, & Happy New Year!

Winter always starts with the Christmas-time activities. So much to do in so little time. Decorating, shopping, cooking, cleaning - places to go, people to see. This is exhausting & stressful to our bodies. Being all happy can really take it out of you. You know what to do, right? Get a massage! Bodywork is not necessarily a luxury, it's a survival tool. We quickly take care of the people we love, but tend to let care of ourselves slip through the cracks. Pain is an annoying tool our bodies use to communicate & get our attention. So be kind to yourself! If this year will be a quiet silly-season for you, the same still applies. Relax, be at peace, & take time to find your 'happy place'. And smiles are contagious...

Winter is also hard on our skin. Everybody drinks more water & uses moisturizers in the summer. But cold weather can actually be more drying to your skin. So keep up the water intake & use body moisturizers. It will be easier to live in your own skin & help you stay healthy!

Remember to keep stretching, & maybe consider what exercise/diet resolutions you can come up with. New Years is when we usually get a burst of motivation, so strategize for your health in 2010. Cheers!!

Smiles always, Lucy

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