



# Staying in Touch®

Body & Sole

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## Hello—

Your body is an ongoing miracle of life. When you stop to think about the millions of little things that are happening within you every second of your life to keep you functioning, it's easy to marvel at the improbable job your body undertakes nonstop throughout your lifetime.

Often, it's the little things that can make all the difference in your health, happiness and well-being. It's easy to base your choices in life without considering what long-term effects these little things may have on your health.

To illustrate this idea, the rest of this issue addresses one specific hormone that your body manufactures, how it affects your health, and how massage can play a role in its production.

My purpose as a bodyworker is to help you improve and maintain your health through massage. The better you understand all the little things massage can do to help you to function your best, the more you should appreciate what a wise choice it is for you to commit to your regular massages.

If you have any questions regarding your health and massage, please ask me at your next appointment. Enjoy spring; I'll see you soon!

## Massage Benefits: Increasing Oxytocin Production

You're probably familiar in general terms about the many ways massage can help your body to function better. Let's take a look at a specific example of one of the positive health changes massage has been shown to bring about—an increase in the production of oxytocin.

### What is oxytocin?

Best known for its role in childbirth and lactation in women, oxytocin is a hormone produced in the brain in both men and women and released into the bloodstream through the pituitary gland. In women, its effects are enhanced and expanded because of their higher estrogen levels. The presence of estrogen increases the number of oxytocin receptors and stimulates production of oxytocin. Oxytocin is also produced in the ovaries and testes as well as walls of blood vessels and in the heart.

### What does it do in the body?

We all need oxytocin to stay physically healthy; it helps us relax and recover from stress, lowering blood pressure. It makes us feel calmer and helps reduce sensitivity to pain, while improving the body's ability to heal. Oxytocin also plays a critical role in our emotions. Released into the brain in social situations of all kinds, it's responsible for trust, generosity, and all kinds of love and personal connection.

### How does it affect men vs. women?

While men and women produce oxytocin in relatively equal amounts, when it comes to the emotional effects, there are strong

differences. Testosterone seems to mute oxytocin's bonding effects, while estrogen enhances them. This explains why it seems so much easier for women to bond with others.



### How can we produce more oxytocin?

Any social interaction that feels safe can cause us to release oxytocin. Studies have shown elevated levels of oxytocin in the blood of people who sang together in a choral group and people who played with their dogs. Pleasant physical touch

also releases oxytocin.

### Massage and oxytocin

According to Dr. Kerstin Uvnäs Moberg, author of *The Oxytocin Factor*, **massage is one of the best ways to get oxytocin released into the body.**

### The Effects of oxytocin

The release of oxytocin into the bloodstream is thought to have important effects, both psychological and physiological. Some results from recent studies include:

**Autism**—Children with autism have been found to have significantly lower levels of oxytocin, as well as hyperactivity in the region of the brain where most oxytocin receptors are located. Studies on individuals with autism have shown a reduction in repetitive behaviors when oxytocin was introduced intravenously.

(See *Massage Benefits ... on back*)

## Massage Benefits: Increasing Oxytocin Production ... *(Continued from front page)*

**Enhanced Digestion**— Oxytocin has been found to regulate the process of digestion. It stimulates the release of various digestive hormones and gastric juices, which in turn leads to a more effective absorption of nutrients.

**Facilitates Wound Healing**— Oxytocin accelerates the body's healing process in part by helping to rejuvenate mucous membranes and encouraging the production of anti-inflammatory reactions.

**Increasing Trust**— Human subjects given oxytocin via a nasal spray displayed a higher level of trust. In one study, small doses of inhaled oxytocin reduced the wariness of strangers in volunteers, while another appeared to make them more empathetic.

**Reducing Anxiety**— Clinical trials using oxytocin sprays have been shown to reduce anxiety and ease symptoms of shyness. It seems to reduce timidity and may help to increase confidence, leading to improved healthy social interaction.

Additionally, oxytocin counters the effects of cortisol, a stress hormone, which, if over long periods of time is produced in high levels in the body, can lead to high blood pressure, lowered immune function and even clinical depression.

Hopefully this information clarifies why you feel so much better after your massages; see you at your next appointment!

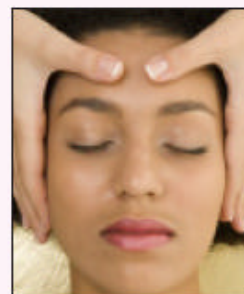
Sources: [www.integrative-healthcare.org](http://www.integrative-healthcare.org); [www.abclocal.go.com](http://www.abclocal.go.com)

### Commit to your health!

Schedule your next massage!  
Regular appointments can:

- Help support better health
- Minimize stress
- Strengthen your immune system
- Give you something to look forward to each month
- Make you feel great!

**Make Mom feel extra special  
this year on Mother's Day with a  
relaxing massage gift certificate!  
Don't wait; call today to order...**



.....  
Besides the noble art of getting things done, there is  
a nobler art of leaving things undone. The wisdom  
of life consists in the elimination of nonessentials.

—Lin Yutang

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

### May specials:

(Available April 25 – May 30)  
Gift certificates for Mother's Day  
and Graduation

1 hour massage	\$40
Reflexology	\$25



### Managing Depression & Anxiety with Essential Oils

Presented by Jamie Hyatt

Thursday, May 13<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM  
At Waterfalls of Wellness Healing Center  
Cost is \$5.00 per person. Registration for  
this class is requested. Contact Jamie Hyatt  
to register at [jamillee@aol.com](mailto:jamillee@aol.com).

## *More Thoughts from Body & Soul*

Several things have come to my attention since last month's newsletter. For one, consider adding more clove to your diet; here's a good article –



### **Cloves are the Best Antioxidant, Says New Study**

Tuesday, April 06, 2010 by: Anthony Gucciardi, citizen journalist

(NaturalNews) New research from the Miguel Hernandez University (UMH) has found that cloves (*Syzygium aromaticum*) are the "best" natural antioxidant. The study examined five antioxidant properties, with cloves showing amazing results for each. Cloves are used primarily in cooking throughout the world but found primarily in Indian cuisine. Cloves have also been used for medicinal purposes, such as in Indian Ayurvedic medicine, Chinese medicine, and western herbalism. In dentistry, cloves are also used as a painkiller.

The study found that cloves contain high levels of phenolic compounds, which have antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and anti-clotting properties. This was a major factor in labeling cloves the best natural antioxidant, but the study found that cloves also have other beneficial properties.

"Out of the five antioxidant properties tested, cloves had the highest capacity to give off hydrogen, reduced lipid peroxidation well, and was the best iron reducer," says Juana Fernandez-Lopez, one of the authors of the study and a researcher at the UMH.

Lipid peroxidation is the process in which free radicals take electrons from the lipids in cell membranes. The end result of this process is cellular damage. The fact that cloves help to inhibit this destructive cycle is one that helped drive them to first place. Furthermore, the ability to reduce iron is yet another profound characteristic of cloves.

Iron deficiencies are rather simple to treat with adequate supplementation or dietary changes, but excessive iron in the body can be quite difficult to treat. Many people suffer from too much iron in the bloodstream, and many of which develop hemochromatosis. Hemochromatosis is a serious condition that is a result of untreated iron overload. Hemochromatosis can lead to arthritis, abnormal liver function, diabetes, or even heart failure.

Another goal of the study is to convince large corporations to begin adding cloves to their food products. Cloves are very inexpensive and have been a major part of the Mediterranean diet for centuries.

"The results show that use of the natural oxidants occurring in spices used in the Mediterranean diet, or their extracts, is a viable option for the food industry, as long as the organoleptic characteristics of the food product are not affected", adds Juana.

Cloves may be what people are looking for when it comes to finding an affordable and practical spice.

**Article Souce:** [http://www.naturalnews.com/028518\\_cloves\\_antioxidants.html](http://www.naturalnews.com/028518_cloves_antioxidants.html)



Spring is a lovely time of year; most of us enjoy being outside in the sunshine getting the garden ready and sprucing up the yard. Remember to use proper lifting techniques as you work, and should your back, legs and arms feel the strain, call for an appointment and feel great again.

If you encounter repetitive injury problems of the wrist, give me a call, I can help you. With warmer weather insects are sometimes a nuisance. Instead of chemicals,

consider going green. You may want to try essential oils to keep away the pests; they work without adding additional toxins to our bodies when they are absorbed. Contact me for specifics. Also take precautions against ticks which can spread Lyme disease.

Have a great spring!

*Judy*