

# Marolyn's Massage Update

Summer 2014

Member, Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals

## The Benefits of Facial Massage

Natalia Doran

A well-performed facial massage is a wonderful treat that will help relieve puffiness and improve skin tone and complexion. Other physical benefits of a facial massage include stimulation of the skin's immune mechanisms, firming of weak muscles, tissue regeneration, and antiaging effects. There are also many mental benefits, including stress relief and a greater awareness of the body-mind connection.

### How the Skin Moves Nutrients

In order to fully understand the benefits of facial massage, it is helpful to understand the anatomy and physiology of the skin.

layer, the epidermis, does not have a direct blood supply--all nutrients, water, and oxygen needed to feed these cells must come from the dermis. If nutrients are lacking in the dermis, the skin cells will be undernourished.

To move from the dermis to the epidermis, nutrients must cross the basement membrane that joins these two layers. Small molecules, such as water, oxygen, carbon dioxide, and glycerol, can cross this membrane by diffusion. Larger molecules must cross by facilitated diffusion (being carried across by proteins). Nutrients or other substances that exist in lower concentrations in the dermis than in the epidermis must be moved into the

*Tell me, what  
it is you plan to  
do with your  
one wild and  
precious life*  
-Poet, Mary Oliver



There are many physical and mental benefits to facial massage.

We all know that skin is a complex organ consisting of a number of specialized cells. Its functions include pH and temperature regulation, and sebum and sweat production. The condition of the integumentary system (the skin and its components) depends on homeostasis and the coordination of circulatory, nerve, muscular, endocrine, and lymphatic systems. The skin's outer

epidermis by active transport. Water, an effective transportation system, can pass through membranes in response to changes in ion concentration. Hormones and mechanical movements, such as massage, can regulate the rate at which water passes through the membrane.

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What about absorption from the outside of the skin into the underlying tissues of the body? Skin permits absorption, but the tightly located coenocytes and lipids between cells make absorption limited. When products are applied to the skin, certain elements play a role in the absorption rate, including the features of the skin, changes in skin barrier function, size of product molecules, and the type of delivery system used in the product.

Connective tissue also plays a role in how the skin moves nutrients. All substances that are transported in the blood must pass through the connective tissue to reach the cells or to be removed as waste. Connective tissue contains cells that produce collagen and elastin, and a half-gel, half-fluid binding mass called the ground substance, which surrounds every cell. Through the ground substance, nutrients are transported from the blood capillaries to the cell, and waste products are moved from the cells to the capillaries. The condition of the ground substance will affect the diffusion rate of nutrients and waste products, creating the cells' environment. This environment can be clean and healthy, or polluted with metabolic wastes.

Applying pressure and movement through massage can help to normalize the function and composition of the connective tissue, and free it of harmful substances.

## Lymphatic Massage

The body's lymphatic system is responsible for draining away the debris from our cells. It transports water out of the tissue, along with waste substances: bacteria, cell fragments, immobile cells, inorganic substances, large molecular fats, proteins, and viruses. This process is constantly happening all over the body, as the lymph cleanses each cell and drains away the debris in a circulatory system powered only by breathing and muscle movements. With mechanical manipulation such as massage, the lymph system can move up to 10 times more fluid than it normally does.

Manual lymph drainage (MLD), which was developed by Emil Vodder, PhD, is a type of gentle massage that accelerates the natural circulation of the lymph and encourages its movement away from

swollen areas. MLD is firm, but gentler than ordinary massage. Because the lymph vessels are all interlinked, lymph flow will be affected in the entire region of the area being massaged. Other types of lymphatic massage include lymph drainage therapy, developed by Bruno Chikly, MD.

A facial massage that involves lymphatic work improves circulation to the skin, which increases nutrition to the skin cells and speeds up the filtering of water in and out of cells, removing waste products. The vasodilation of the surface capillaries during massage improves skin color, and facial massage also improves elasticity and suppleness of the skin. With facial massage, the skin becomes more balanced, less prone to breakouts, and more resistant to infection.

*Natalia Doran, MD, is the founder and president of*

*the International Skin Beauty Academy in Illinois. She has a medical degree in dermatology and a master's degree in educational psychology.*



**Pamper yourself, and do a good thing for your body too!**

# Pre-Session Yoga Moves for Calm

Mary Beth Braun

It's one of those mornings. Your alarm didn't go off and you have an appointment in an hour. How can you quickly collect and calm yourself enough to be fully present for the day ahead? Breath and yoga.

## BREATH

Take this time to center and calm yourself. Start by channeling your yoga instructor or massage therapist and begin with breath (pranayama): inhaling to the count of three and exhaling to the count of six. Do this three times and move on to do a few yoga poses (asanas).

## YOGA

You remember a few basic yoga poses from class, right? Try these two: simple seated twist and standing half moon.

## SIMPLE SEATED TWIST

Continuing to use your breath, sit on the floor in an easy, cross-legged pose and begin simple seated twist. Raise the crown of your head to the ceiling, elongating your neck and spine. Inhale

and exhale, then twist to the left. Exhaling, move through center, and repeat on the right, continuing to inhale and exhale.

## STANDING HALF MOON, BIKRAM STYLE

From there, step your right foot forward, followed by your left foot, and slowly roll up one vertebrae at a time until you are standing upright with your feet firmly grounded into the earth.

Feeling your feet firmly grounded, raise your hands overhead, taking the wrinkles out of your neck and elongating your spine. Inhale, exhale, and side bend to the right. Once there, exhale and feel your side body open up as you press your foot into the earth to enhance the stretch. Inhaling through center, exhale and bend to the left. Return to your center and take one more deep breath in and out.

You feel better, right? Now, let go of that harried morning and begin your day fully present and centered.

Mary Beth Braun is a certified massage therapist based in Indianapolis, Indiana.



Channel your inner yoga instructor.

# Yogurt, the Super Food

## Balance Digestion, Improve Immunity, and Prevent Disease

In some form, yogurt has existed since at least 2000 BCE, and many food historians believe it predates recorded history, possibly going back as far as 9000 BCE. Why such staying power? A bit of a wonder food, yogurt improves digestion, which can boost immunity and even help prevent colon cancer. One dairy product even most lactose intolerant people can eat, yogurt is loaded with active bacterial cultures, the key ingredients that make it so healthy.

While we typically think of bacteria as dangerous bugs that cause disease and infection, the body is host to billions of bacteria that live in the intestines and help digest the foods we eat. These good bacteria, or microflora, actually fight off the bad bacteria that cause illness.

Some of these same good bacterial

species are used to ferment milk, and it's these cultures that give yogurt its texture and tart flavor. They also process much of the milk sugar, called lactose, during fermentation, which is why yogurt usually doesn't bother people with lactose intolerance.

Eating yogurt helps maintain the microflora in the gut, optimizing digestion and keeping harmful bacteria in check. Ever noticed how a course of antibiotics is often followed by a bout of diarrhea? This is because antibiotics kill off all the bacteria in the gut--the bad stuff and the good--leaving the gastrointestinal tract compromised. Fortunately, yogurt can help counteract this imbalance.

Furthermore, this food is a good source of nutrients, including B vitamins,

calcium, magnesium, and phosphorus. Whole milk yogurt also contains conjugated linoleic acid (CLA), an essential fatty acid with cancer fighting properties, especially beneficial in preventing breast and colon cancers. And CLA has been shown to increase fat metabolism, helping the body convert fat to lean muscle.

Maintaining the good bacteria in the gastrointestinal tract is key to healthy digestion, and eating quality yogurt is a great way to do this. Be sure to read the labels and choose varieties that contain live active cultures to ensure you're getting the most from your yogurt.

*In three words I  
can sum up  
everything I've  
learned about  
life: it goes on*

-Robert Frost

## WELCOME TO SPRING/SUMMER 2014

My personal theme this year is "self care". Over the years I have observed that when people commit to self care their lives enrich, broaden and generally become happier. In an effort to help promote the "Self Care" theme, Access Bodyworks will be offering some monthly specials on services. Stay tuned to email announcements so you can enjoy some summertime bonuses.

Stay safe, happy and hydrated throughout our summer season. And know that each and every one of you is most appreciated.

Be well,  
Marolyn

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