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Benefits of Massage

Massage is one of the oldest, simplest forms of therapy and is a system of stroking, pressing and kneading different areas of the body, which can help to relieve pain, relax, stimulate, and tone the body.

Massage offers lots of health benefits and can be used in many diseases such as; heart problems, sleep, nervous system, Diabetes, urinary problems, and digestive problems. For people with refractory disease, massage is often applied as complementary therapy to help patients reduce sufferings and recover quickly.

Massage is not only helpful for patients, but also beneficial for healthy people. In our body, there are more than 1,000 acupoints in our body and by pressing them, our immune system can be strengthened and immunity can be increased. A strong immune system is the key point for one to live healthily, so with massage, our risk of being affected by illnesses can be lowered effectively and greatly.

Other benefits in massage are:

- Cause changes in the blood. The oxygen capacity of the blood can increase 10-15% after a massage.
- Affect muscles throughout the body. Massage can help loosen contracted, shortened muscles and can stimulate weak, flaccid muscles. This muscle “balancing” can help posture and promote more efficient movement.
- Increase the body’s secretions and excretions. There is a proven increase in the production of gastric juices, saliva, and urine. There is also increased excretion of nitrogen, inorganic phosphorus, and sodium chloride (salt). This suggests that the metabolic rate (the utilization of absorbed material by the body’s cells) increases.
- Affect the nervous system. Massage balances the nervous system by soothing or stimulating it.
- Enhance skin condition. Massage directly improves the function of the sebaceous (oil) and sweat glands which keep the skin lubricated, clean, and cooled. Tough inflexible skin can become softer and suppler.
- Affect internal organs. By indirectly or directly stimulating nerves that supply internal organs, blood vessels of these organs dilate and allow greater blood supply to them.

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Kristi



Damian



Toni



Michael

Recipe of the Month: Mediterranean Portobello Burger

Directions

1. Preheat grill to medium-high.
2. Mash garlic and salt on a cutting board with the side of a knife until it's a smooth paste. Mix the paste with 1TBSP oil in a small dish. Lightly brush the oil mixture over Portobello's and then on one side of each slice of bread.
3. Combine red peppers, tomato, feta, olives, vinegar, oregano and the remaining 1 TBSP of oil in a medium bowl.
4. Grill the mushroom caps until tender, about 4 minutes per side; grill the bread until crisp, about 1 minute per side.
5. Toss salad greens with the red pepper mixture. Place the grilled mushrooms top-side down on 4 half-slices of the bread. Top with salad mixture and the remaining bread.



Ingredients

- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ½ tsp kosher salt
- 2tbsp extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 4 Portobello mushroom caps, stems and gills removed
- 4 large slices country-style sourdough bread, cut in half
- ½ cup sliced jarred roasted red peppers
- ½ cup chopped tomato
- ¼ cup crumbled reduced-fat feta cheese
- 2 tbsp. chopped pitted Kalamata olives
- 1 tbsp. red-wine vinegar
- ½ tsp dried oregano
- 2 cups loosely packed mixed baby salad greens

Active: 30min Ready in 30min

Summer Snack Ideas

Try some fun and refreshing summer snacks that the entire family can enjoy:

- **Fruit pops:** Homemade freezer pops are an easy, fun treat for kids to make. Mash up fruit like peaches, grapes, berries or watermelon and put them in paper cups, insert a popsicle stick, freeze overnight and enjoy!
- **Cool and crisp:** keep a variety of colorful veggies on hand that stay cool and crunchy for a refreshing treat – baby carrots, cucumber slices, and celery sticks are just a few ideas.
- **Fruit smoothies:** blend your favorite fresh fruits with fat-free or low-fat yogurt and ice for a refreshing drink or freeze and eat with a spoon like a frozen icee/slushy.
- **Mix it up:** make your own trail mix using your favorite unsalted or lightly salted nuts, seeds and unsweetened dried fruits (just be sure to keep your servings to 1.5 ounces or 1/3 cup).
- **Just slice and serve:** summer months are peak season for most fruits, just slice and serve – the whole family will enjoy the refreshing natural sweetness and juices just the way nature made 'em.

"Summer Tips for a Healthy Heart." *How Cigarettes Damage Your Body*,
www.heart.org/HEARTORG/HealthyLiving/HealthyEating/Nutrition/Summer-Tips-for-a-Healthy-Heart_UCM_303868_Article.jsp#.Wxa2CZ9KiM8.