



Staying in Touch®

Hello—

Life certainly has gotten more interesting lately, which translates to more stressful conditions for many of us. Life is always going to have its ups and downs—it's what we do each day that makes all the difference.

One simple way you can make things better for yourself is to make getting that next massage a high priority. What better way to get away from everything for an hour and return refreshed and ready to carry on with your regular life?

Massage is the ideal way to give both your health and your spirit a great boost whenever you need it! It can help you to relax and rejuvenate when you need it the most. Be sure to make your health and well-being a priority, so you can continue to feel your best in the coming days. You're worth it!

Enjoy the rest of this issue. The article on why joints pop seemed like some timely information, with spring getting underway.

Remember that Mother's Day is right around the corner, so call about gift certificates. See you soon!

Massage Helps to Get Back into the "Spring" of Things

We're heading into the season when many people increase their activity levels. As the weather turns nicer, you may find yourself taking long walks, working in the garden, or any number of activities that can put a little more stress on your well-rested body. It's great to get out and get moving, as long as you pace yourself.



Scheduling a massage can really help your body make the transition from winter couch potato and prepare you for the spring season. Here's how:

When you've been inactive for a while, the lack of physical activity results in reduced

body function. Your muscles have been on vacation, and the capillaries that supply nourishing blood to the area diminish from lack of use. The tricky part is that the new muscle fiber is capable of growing more rapidly than is the needed blood supply to the area.

Massage can help your recovery time. Through the light squeeze and release of muscles, circulation is improved. This increased

blood flow brings nutrients like oxygen to your cells and carries toxins away for disposal. Muscle elasticity and strength can be improved, as well. So, schedule that next massage and help yourself get back into the swing of things!

What Causes My Joints to Make That Popping Sound?

Q. When I exercise or stretch, my joints pop, and it sounds like I'm cracking my knuckles. Should I be concerned?

A. There is no clear reason why some joints pop; several things seem to contribute to this odd body phenomenon.

When you picture any of your joints, you've got the meeting of two or more bones. These bones are held in place by ligaments, then you have the tendons that connect the muscles that move the bones. There is cartilage that pads the joints as well as fluid for lubricating the joints.

When everything is working properly, the movement of your joints can occur smoothly and quietly. Things like an arthritic condition (*an inflammation of a joint*), a worn or uneven surface, or greater than average force on a joint can bring

about that familiar popping sound—often caused by the formation of an air pocket from body movement.

It doesn't always take a lot of pressure or force to bring on that joint popping sound. However, when you are exercising your body, sudden or extended movements, as well as lifting heavier weights, can increase the likelihood of popping joints.

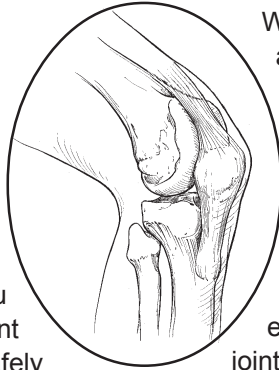
Are popping joints something to worry about? According to an article by Martica Heaner, M.A., M.Ed., for MSN Health & Fitness, "The general assumption by health professionals is that if you feel no pain, it's not something to worry about. Still, it's probably not a good idea to purposely crack your knuckles, neck or back."

Martica goes on to say, "When you (see *Popping Joints ... on back*)

Popping joints ...

(Cont. from front page)

increase your exercise intensity by changing what you do, you can add more stress to your body. If you're used to walking and you suddenly shift to workouts that emphasize running and jumping, for example, or when you bump up the amount of weight that you lift, the overload to the joint may be just enough to safely challenge the body to work harder—or it might be too much, cause the body to strain to cope with the new stimulus.



mobilize the joints prior to vigorous action for at least five to 10 minutes, you'll best prepare your body for a harder or longer challenge."

When it comes to your health, it's always safer to take a cautious approach. Try to increase your activity levels at a nice, easy pace to avoid undue stress to your joints.

Proper exercise can help your joint health. Joint movement encourages lubrication of the joint. The ligaments, tendons, and joint capsule are warmed from the

movement, which helps to keep these tissues pliable.

And remember that massage helps all areas of your body to function better. Each massage you receive can help to increase the circulation to the joint area so each joint will receive the raw materials and nourishment it requires. This increased circulation can help to remove any cellular waste as well.

The conditions that tend to cause a muscle to remain too tense or a joint to be stiff and limited in its range of motion in many cases can be normalized through regular massage.

Back page graphic from the MediClip Manual Medicine Collection, William & Wilkins, A Waverly Co.

"But it's not just the super-hard stuff that can overload your body. If you go longer and increase the total time you spend exercising (going from thrice-weekly jogs to long hours every day to train for a marathon, for example), the body could experience stress if it isn't ready to cope with the endurance required to maintain the movement.

"Joints move smoothly and with less friction when the body is warmed up and synovial fluid is released. If you start any workout—no matter what type—with light, easy movements that

Mother's Day will soon be here!
Show Mom how much you appreciate her this year with a gift certificate for massage! Call to order ...

Let us be grateful to people who make us happy, they are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom. —Marcel Proust

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