



Staying in Touch®

Hello—

If you undertake any activity regularly—whether for work or play—chances are good that you subject yourself to some physical strain. One reason so many people are now experiencing repetitive strain injuries is the subtle nature of the problem.

Many of these injuries develop undetected, because they can develop slowly over time. Being aware how you use your body—particularly your arms, wrists and hands—can help you to avoid more serious problems later on.

This issue should give you an overview of these disorders and how massage can help your body rebound from any repetitive strain injuries—and prevent future problems. You'll also find some exercises on the back page to help you between your massages.

Remember to share any conditions or physical complaints you're experiencing before your next massage. It will help you get the best results from each visit!

In the meantime, take good care of yourself; see you soon!

Repetitive Strain Injuries Benefit from Massage

A growing number of people are suffering from the various disorders that are classified as repetitive strain injuries (RSI), which often affect the neck, shoulders, arms, wrists or hands. Repetitive motion injuries are among the most common injuries in the U.S. and make up over 50% of all athletic-related injuries seen by doctors.¹

Many RSI sufferers are among the high percentage of people spending hours each day working at a computer, but any activity that calls for repetitive motions can bring on or exacerbate these disorders.

The good news is that massage can help these conditions. Excerpts from an article found online at rsiwarrior.com sum up the benefits:

“Massage is a type of therapy that can relieve stress, lessen pain, help prevent injury, and speed the healing process. In certain cases, massage therapy can eliminate or reduce the need for surgery or pain medication. ... The gentle kneading and stretching motions improve circulation and reduce tension, and can improve joint movements.

“Inflammation, muscle strain, and tendonitis can be greatly reduced through the use of massage. Therapeutic massage can be used to prevent injury that is caused by muscle strain and unnatural movements.

“Muscle cramps, aching shoulders, and muscle tightness can be relieved through the use of therapeutic massage. Some massage techniques eliminate muscle pain by stretching and kneading the

muscles directly while other massage techniques stimulate the nervous system, allowing the muscles to relax.

“Muscles that are tight and contracted can cause pain or tingling in the extremities. Massage can stop the muscle spasms that are the cause of this pain and tingling.

... Massage can greatly reduce inflammation by bringing nutrients and improved circulation to the muscles.

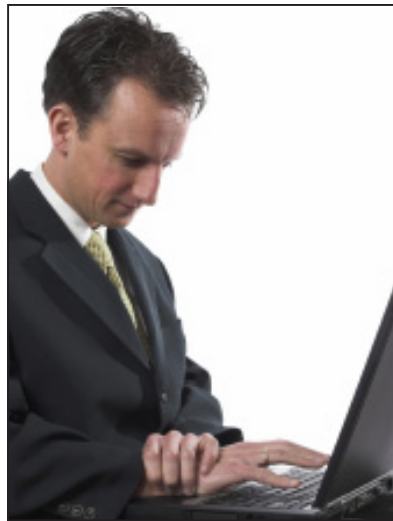
“By relieving tension and muscle tightness, massage can actually be used to prevent new injuries. Muscle groups that are tight and stressed can cause you to favor one side of the body or another and actually contribute to new or repeated injuries.

Massage is a wonderful preventative measure that will help guard against repetitive strains and injuries.

“Repetitive strain injury can be quite painful and cause crippling disability. Prevention and early treatment are the best ways to relieve the pain caused by RSI. Massage can reduce the discomfort and inflammation caused by repetitive strain injury, and can help prevent future injuries. Massage will allow for greater flexibility of the joints and muscles and can provide much needed relief from RSI. ... The use of massage therapy for treatment of RSI is quite effective.”

Here's one more reason to make regular massage an important part of your life! See you at your next appointment.

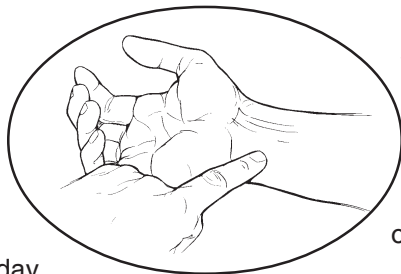
References: 1. emedicinehealth.com; RSI-Relief.com



Self Care for RSI ...

To help you between massage sessions, you can lessen the strain of repetitive motion problems with these tips and simple exercises:

“The first step to preventing or treating this type of strain is to curtail what’s causing it—overuse. Try to integrate more breaks into your work day if you can. Rest your arm and get up from your desk and move around.



“How often you give your arms a rest depends on what you do, of course. But if you’re at a computer much of the day, try to limit your time on it. That means no procrastination Web surfing and limited personal e-mails. Instead of e-mailing a co-worker, go speak to them. Organize your day so that you’re not at the computer all morning and in meetings all afternoon. Instead, plan your schedule so that you alternate duties frequently. When you are at your computer for long periods, take a hand break every 30 minutes to an hour and do these hand stretches to relieve some of the built-up tension:

1. Stretch your fingers out wide and move your hands in all directions.
2. Make a fist and rotate your wrists to stretch out tightness in the upper hand.
3. With your arm outstretched, bend your hand inwards and point your fingers down to stretch the top of the hand and forearm.
4. Open both arms in a T position to the sides. Make a fist and point your

thumbs up, then rotate them back and open your arms a little wider to stretch out the chest and biceps.

5. Clasp your hands behind your back and raise them an inch or two as you open your shoulders to stretch the chest.

6. Massage the palm of your overworked hand, as well as the top and bottom of your forearm with your less-used hand.”

by Martica Heaner, M.A., M.Ed., for MSN Health & Fitness

Back-page graphic from the MediClip Manual Medicine Collection, Williams & Wilkins, A Waverly Company

**Do you need a great gift in a hurry?
How about a gift certificate for massage?
There’s nothing like the gift of health!**

**A man too busy to take care of his health is like
a mechanic too busy to take care of his tools.**

—Spanish proverb

Your referrals are always appreciated!

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