

MASSAGE

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If an issue is lurking in the muscles, she said she usually finds it before the athlete.

People also use massage to maximize physical performance and decrease recovery time.

Smarr said massage works as a way to flush the muscles because it increases blood flow. Doing so allows athletes to recover quicker after strenuous activities.

When a muscle has a knot, it also becomes less efficient. Smarr said muscles work through the contraction and expansion of the tissue, but when it is knotted, only a portion of the muscles can contract and expand.

Massage therapy loosens the knot, she said, allowing an athlete to fully use the muscle again.

Pain

Smarr recommends anyone dealing with ongoing pain who has decided to live with it to consider massage therapy.

“I’d just challenge them to look at life a little different and see if they need to live in pain,” she said.

Old injuries that are untreated can often lead to new injuries, which become more difficult to treat, she said.

Sometimes, she can advise a patient over the phone whether she believes massage therapy will be effective to treat a certain condition.

Whether dealing with a sprain or whiplash, carpal tunnel syndrome, plantar fasciitis, a traumatic injury or any other type of pain, Smarr said massage may provide relief.

“If it doesn’t work, it doesn’t work, but you’d find out,” she said.

Rose Smarr is a licensed massage therapist in Oregon, practicing in John Day. She can be contacted at 541-620-4496.

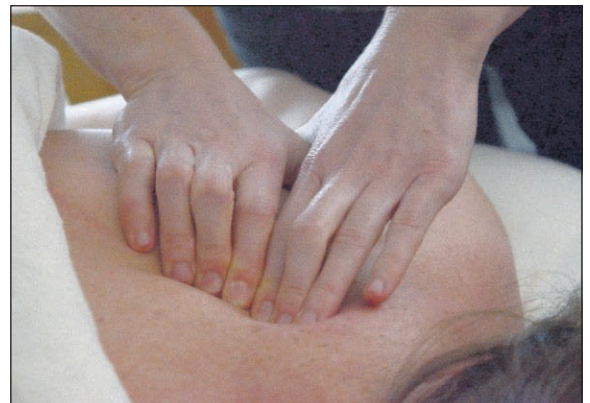


Eagle photos/Sean Hart

Rose Smarr explains how vertebrae can become compacted at her office in John Day. Massage therapy can remove pressure from bones, allowing them to slide into place, she said.



Massage therapy can be beneficial for carpal tunnel syndrome.



Massage therapy promotes healing by improving blood flow.

Questions about massage therapy?

People who have never tried massage therapy may have many questions, and Smarr encourages people to ask them.

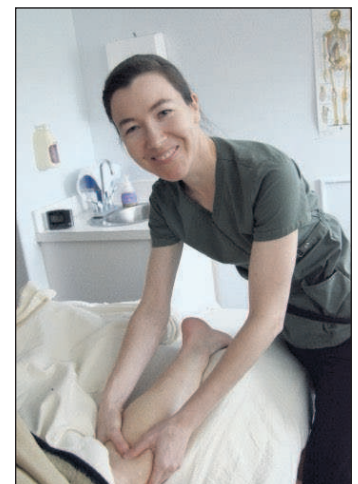
“They’re in control of this,” she said. “They usually don’t feel like they are, but they are. It’s definitely their session because it’s their body.”

Smarr said many people may not realize that only about half of the therapeutic massage techniques require skin-to-skin contact so people can often leave their clothes on.

She said it is important for a patient to feel comfortable with their massage therapist and recommends knowing their expertise. Patients should interview their therapist, she said:

- What type of training did they complete?
- How much experience do they have?
- How often did they treat this condition?
- How often is this successful?
- How many treatments are expected?

“Be an active part of the process,” Smarr said. “You’ll get a lot more out of it.”



Rose Smarr works on the calf muscle of a patient using a deep-tissue technique.