



# massage for **active**

Champion bike racer  
Jimmy Deer covers  
12,000 miles a year,  
with the help of massage.

# seniors

**These methods will ensure  
that your older clients remain in  
good shape for years to come.**

*By Paula S. Stone*

**t**oday's active seniors can expect to live a longer, healthier life than ever, thanks to advances in medical science, nutrition and the desire to remain fit and engaged in life. Massage therapy can play a key and satisfying role in helping clients achieve their health and fitness goals. This group ranges from those who want to become more active, to those who want to remain high performers.

Information abounds, but objective, scientifically based research on how massage therapy plays into the senior fitness mix remains hard to find. In looking at what therapists can do now, it's important to evaluate where the client is in his or her program. Is the client just beginning? Has he or she exercised earlier in life? If so, to what extent and fitness level? Does the client have health issues?

*Photos by Stewart Cohen*

## Benefits Of Massage

Massage benefits seniors in much the same way as it does other age groups. Massage positively affects all body systems, including the circulatory, nervous, muscular, lymphatic, immune and digestive systems. In general, the level of fitness and health of the senior determines special considerations in massage.

**Health Concerns.** Seniors with health considerations can have hesitations about exercising at all. Getting a green light from their doctor is a prerequisite. Yet the major risk for most people is in not exercising. However, massage is especially beneficial to those with arthritis, diabetes, circulatory problems and high blood pressure. Massage releases endorphins (the natural painkiller) into the bloodstream. Many clients report feeling better, and experiencing deeper and better sleep following massage.

**Inactive Seniors.** For inactive seniors beginning or returning to a fitness program, massage helps relieve stiff joints, achy muscles and sore backs. Soothing therapy can work out the creaks, aches and pains in the aging body, and encourage seniors to continue their fitness programs as the body adapts to movement and change.

**Active Seniors.** Moderately active and highly active seniors who seek to maintain an active daily lifestyle benefit from massage in the same way as do less-active seniors. Different body-work needs arise as this group is engaged more frequently, and for longer duration, in fitness activities that can result in strain and injury from overuse, misuse or accidents.

**Competitive Seniors And Professional Athletes.** Seniors who compete systematically monitor the intensity, duration and performance goals of their workouts or competitions. Pushing the envelope often creates the need for restorative massage techniques as the body resists change and works around old injuries.

## Recovery And Massage

All active individuals, regardless of their exercise program, need to value proper recovery following training. Recovery is especially important for the competitive senior or professional athlete. The American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) states, "Athletes improve during recovery, not training; the purpose of training is to cause adaptation that takes place during recovery. Coaches must plan and prepare as much for recovery as they do for training." ACSM includes massage therapy as a proactive restorative technique.

The advice of ACSM, located on the organization's Web site [www.acsm.org], holds true for all active seniors. Key points include:

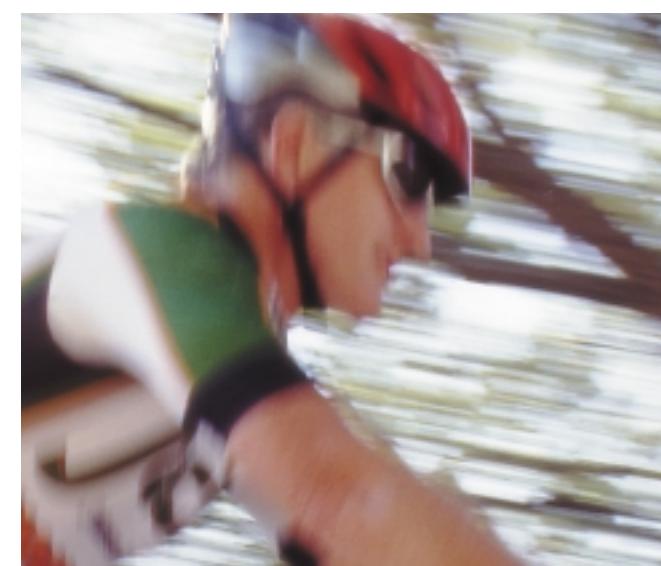
- Get plenty of rest—six to eight hours minimum. Sleep deficits and fatigue affect performance.
- Eat regular, balanced meals.
- Drink water and fluids for peak hydration.

According to ACSM, "Coaches should consult with appropriate professionals about proactive restoration techniques like massage therapy or relaxation/stress management programs with appropriate experts to ensure that athletes are recovering properly." Communicate to determine if recovery is adequate to continue training.

Recovery is a natural aspect of the fitness cycle. Seniors at all levels of fitness undergo recovery from exertion. For some, a moderate activity such as walking requires recovery. For others, recovery follows more strenuous activities.

Another factor is the cumulative effect of injuries over time. Small tears, strains and injuries build up on each other in the soft tissue (i.e., muscles, fascia and ligaments). The cumulative effect later in life is typically reduced flexibility and range of motion.

This situation characterizes another level of recovery illustrated in the life of former marathon runner and mountain bike champion Jimmy Deer. While in his 40s, Deer recognized that the fitness lifestyle of his 20s produced increasing rigidity, slowing recovery and declining performance. This led Deer to



**Seniors at all levels of fitness undergo recovery from exertion. For some, a moderate activity such as walking requires recovery. For others, recovery follows more strenuous activities.**



## Pin-Resist Release (above)

This technique helps break up scar tissue and work myofascia to free up muscle tissue in the upper arm. We pin the muscle where we find knots, congestion or scar tissue, and gently move the arm back and forth, followed by deep transverse friction. As we continue to pin the tissue, we have the client apply forward resistance (about 20 percent strength), and release, followed by back resistance and release. Repeat several times until tissue begins to relax and loosen. This should cause greater mobility and range of motion in the arm.

## Anterior Resist-Release (below)

(Head And Neck forward)

This technique helps to loosen and stretch the muscle attachments in the head and neck area. Therapist places palm of hand under client's chin, and applies mild resistance as the client lowers the chin toward the chest. Repeat this several times, to continue loosening and strengthening the muscle attachments. This gives greater mobility and strength to the forward movement of the head.





### Side To Side Resist-Release (left)

#### (Head And Neck)

With this motion the therapist places thumbs along the occipital ridge and fingers on the side of the head, above and below the ear, and gently rocks head side to side. Next, the therapist applies mild resistance as the client rocks the head right, then left. Repeat this movement several times. This gives greater side-to-side mobility of the head and neck.



### Posterior Resist-Release (right)

#### (Head And Neck)

Therapist places thumbs piggyback-style (one hand on top of the other) on the occipital ridge and elbows on table for leverage. Instruct client to rock their head back slowly bringing chin up as they inhale, hold the pressure three seconds and release as they exhale.

Therapist then moves thumbs to next vertebrae and repeats sequence, gradually working their way to the seventh cervical or wherever it is comfortable for the client. (Usually you can work up to the fourth to seventh cervical areas.)

## A Useful Modality For Athletes

MyoFlexxion™ therapy is the culmination of a lifetime of anatomical and physiological research and hands-on experience by Dallas-based Virginia Brown. Brown has more than 20 years of experience as a massage therapist and reflexologist, and has taught both modalities. In addition, she spent many years in the chiropractic and dental fields.

Brown defines MyoFlexxion therapy as the unique method of flushing, purging and freeing muscle and soft tissue through a combination of flexion and extension, stretching and rotation movement, while the muscle is being manipulated by one or more of the following: effleurage, petrissage, percussion, friction, vibration and pinning.

The roots of the modality began in 1960, when Brown worked as a dental surgical assistant in Fort Worth. She learned the intricate structure of the mouth and jaw; the identification, cause and repair of gum disease; and how the muscles of the head and neck affect the structure of the mouth. This experience provided the groundwork for developing the MyoFlexxion techniques and Hydra-Surge™, which are highly effective in relieving temporomandibular joint disorder.

Moving to Lubbock, Texas, in 1978, Brown worked in a chiropractic setting. In 1982, she became a certified reflexologist, and then began teaching reflexology in 1987. During this time, a 100-hour course in Alexander Technique and private lessons added to her understanding of body movement. Two years later, Brown earned a massage therapy license from the state of Texas, and later became a licensed massage therapy instructor. Relocating to Dallas, she continued formal training in Myofascial Release® and sports massage.

Since the 1990s, Brown has taught an integrated system of MyoFlexxion—Hydra-Surge™ and the Ingham method of reflexology—to provide a comprehensive bodywork modality. Her goal is to teach health professionals, while continuing to develop both new and enhanced techniques.

participate in therapeutic sports massage therapy. Today, at age 57, Deer still performs at a very high level. In fact, earlier this fall he won the Texas State Road Race Championship in his age bracket (55-plus).

What about seniors who are recovering from serious injury? What role can massage therapy play in helping these people? Lee Trevino, one of the most successful professional golfers of all time, claims he owes his career to massage. Now 63, he continues to compete on the Champions (formerly the Senior) Tour after surviving a lightning strike 28 years ago, as well as three subsequent surgeries. Since those medical setbacks, he has regained his flexibility, improved his swing and extended his career, thanks to his fitness lifestyle and massage therapy. (Read more in sidebar on Page 54.)

### Body Dynamics

Routine movements over the years, as well as sports and fitness activities, have an accumulative effect on the body and biomechanics of the body. Seniors often experience an increasing lack

of flexibility that can develop into rigidity when performing specific actions, such as rotation. And rotation is everything in golf, tennis, racquetball, basketball and badminton. Swinging a golf club or racquet vigorously torques the body, placing tremendous stress on the upper back, lower back and shoulder girdle. Correct body dynamics make the difference between natural, unimpeded execution and a body that compromises movements and results.

The quadratus lumborum and hip rotators provide the power in swinging. When the lower body is consistent, the sports enthusiast has a smooth, consistent rotation and swing. Through repeated injury and increasing lack of flexibility, the lower body locks down and fails to rotate. Tremendous pressure on the low back occurs when the upper body is moving and the lower body is not. Microtears result and increase over time. Painful scar tissue builds up around the hips, and these areas become knotted. When these muscles are locked, there is no mobility, no consistency.

The feet, especially the foot that pivots (as in golf, soccer and basketball), take a beating, and turf toe builds up. The toes on these highly active seniors and professional athletes become straight and

fail to bend, making it painful and difficult to sleep and recover. All this affects performance and overall well-being.

This progression is not predestined. This pattern is identifiable, preventable and, to varying degrees, reversible.

### The Approach

Many people seek help when factors combine to inhibit them from accomplishing a goal. These inhibitions can be as simple as getting in and out of one's car, to losing one's edge.

Professional athletes Jimmy Deer and Lee Trevino sought therapy as a result of compromised performance. Both of these Dallas residents selected Virginia Brown, a specialist in sports massage. (See sidebar above.)

Deer, who earned a master's degree in finance from Southern Methodist University in Dallas and chose a career in commercial banking and finance, won numerous championships as a runner and cyclist. The accumulation of injuries sustained over almost 20 years produced a painful groin pull in the early 1990s. Massage therapy provided relief. While working through

the groin pull, other old injuries were noted and addressed. "I saw the benefits immediately," says Deer, who since this incident continues receiving bodywork on a regular basis as a preventive measure.

Trevino has enjoyed a spectacular career, winning 29 tournaments on the regular PGA Tour, and, coincidentally, another 29 tournaments on the Champions Tour. His success is even more remarkable considering that 28 years ago, his career, not to mention his life, was threatened when he was struck by lightning in 1975, during a tournament in Chicago. As part of his therapy, Trevino started receiving massage on a set schedule as part of his restorative health program. He continues getting massages today on a regular basis for maintenance and well-being.

### **Frequency Is The Key**

It takes years for the body to build layers of scar tissue. When therapists break down scar tissue, maintenance is required to keep it from reforming. How long it takes to remove scar tissue depends on a person's body, type of injury, and the number of years the scar tissue was present. "As a general rule, it will take a month for every year someone has had scar tissue," says Brown.

When clients start and stop the sessions, the tissue locks down, and the therapist must start over. An optimum sample treatment program is three sessions in Week 1, two in Week 2, and weekly in Week 3 and beyond. Sessions may increase in frequency depending on the original state of the injury and other factors. Once scar tissue is removed, monthly maintenance will prevent it from reforming.

Trevino vouches for the program. "With this therapy it is impossible to be sporadic and make progress. You must be consistent. It takes time to work through layers and layers of

**This August,  
my performance  
was better than it was  
20 years ago**



scar tissue. I gauge progress like an athlete. You have to work through the process to take care of your ligaments and muscles to retain agility. Since having regular sessions, I've been injury-free," he says.

Deer receives massage on a scheduled basis to prevent or mitigate the effects of injury, to achieve a faster recovery and to maintain stamina. Therapy keeps Deer flexible with the needed range of motion to remain in peak form and prevent injury. Chronic back trouble has been Deer's companion since the 1980s. Its effects can be debilitating. "Regular massage

keeps my body in top condition and chronic back trouble in check completely," he says.

### **A Bike Champion's Regimen**

Deer's interest in high-level fitness emerged in the 1970s, when he began running while in graduate school. The focus of intense training and participation in all levels of running, including marathons, was to maintain a high level of fitness, to test one's abilities and to have fun. "I muddled through running with periodic injuries because I had youth on my side," Deer says.

After more than a decade of serious training, and countless runs and wins, Deer turned to new challenges. In his mid-30s, he migrated to dirt and road cycling, and then to dirt motorcycles. Over the years, Deer has won several state and regional bike races. "I visited the emergency room often," he recalls with a smile.

Injuries, small and large, placed wear and tear on his body. In the early 1990s, Deer suffered from debilitating back trouble, and lost flexibility and range of motion. In addition, he also had a serious groin injury. Massage therapy and reflexology corrected these conditions. "I was convinced of the benefits after the first session," Deer says.

Today, Deer continues to train and work hard. This low-keyed guy has run 3,400 to 3,500 miles per year, the last three years or so, to remain in top form. He rides his mountain bike for fun, having clocked around 15,000 miles in 2002. He expects to ride about 12,000 miles by the end of this year. He competes in road bike races of all distances.

Since the 1980s, Deer has ridden the same mountain bike territory in Crested Butte, Colorado. "This August, my performance was better than it was 20 years ago," said Deer. This comparative performance against himself gives Deer an accurate gauge of his physical and mental conditioning.

"At 57, I'm every bit as fit as most of the 20- and 30-year-olds I train with and compete against. I would not handle the workload to maintain this level of fitness if it weren't for regular bodywork," says Deer. "I see no reason to doubt that I will stay fit into my 60s and 70s by taking care of myself."

### **Massage Sequence**

The core concept is to achieve a condition in which the muscles and fascia move independently and fluidly. The therapist uses the fingertips to locate knots, ridges, scar tissue, adhesions, and any irregularities in the muscle or fascia that would inhibit free movement. Once identified, MyoFlexxion uses a combination of muscle movement and deep tissue work to manipu-

late the muscle, fascia and, when needed, scar tissue. The objective is to loosen the muscle fibers and fascia, break down the scar tissue in the muscle and fascia and then use effleurage strokes to smooth muscle fibers. This encourages the body to repair and rebuild the tissue in smooth, long fibers.

Good nutrition, rest and a restorative health regime support the growth of smooth muscle and fascia. The body achieves a structure characterized by more fluid movement with less or no pain. The whole body massage sequence is highly intricate and complex. Specific techniques are described below.

Throughout the sequence, the client exhales on the stretch or resistance activity. Manual traction illustrates both the technique and the breathing pattern.

### **Manual Traction**

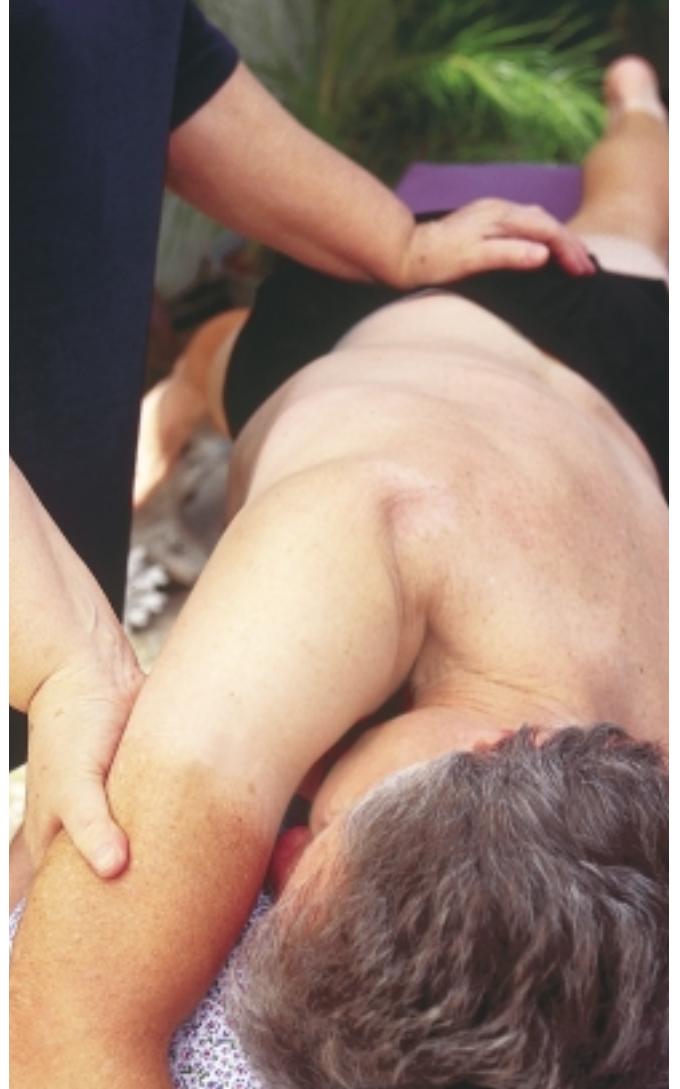
Manual traction systematically stretches the neck to increase flexibility and range of motion. The therapist rests his or her elbows on the table. Cup the hands to place the thumbs along the client's occipital bones so the base of the client's skull rests on the thumbs. The client inhales. On the exhale, the client slowly bends the head backward toward the table as far as is comfortable. The client inhales and lifts the head. The therapist moves the cupped hands and thumbs inferiorly one vertebra. The client repeats the breathing and stretching pattern. Continue the process as long as it remains comfortable for the client. The maximum position for this stretch is the seventh cervical.

### **Scar Tissue In The Fascia**

The therapist uses a combination of muscle movement and deep tissue work to break down and remove impinging scar tissue in the fascia of the muscle in the shoulder joint. The therapist holds the wrist or hand of the client, and horizontally adducts the arm with the elbow bent at a 45-degree angle. Swing the arm gently toward and away from the body between movements to relax any tension in the shoulder girdle.

Place one, two or three fingers, or fist, into the underarm socket. Selection depends on the size of the client, the size of the therapist and the objective of the technique. Fingertips are effective in reaching certain points, and on smaller people and children. A fist may be helpful for a large man or highly muscled person. Tight muscles or body hair may contribute to tenderness. To increase comfort, the beginning therapist wraps fingertips with the sheet before proceeding.

The objective is to locate, pin and stretch the shoulder muscles where they attach to the glenohumeral joint. With the arm bent at a 45-degree angle, position the fingers into the underarm socket to pin the latissimus dorsi where it crosses the lower tip of the shoulder blade, and comes around to attach to the humerus. Still pinning, gently move the arm to flex, extend, abduct and adduct the shoulder. As the muscle warms and releases, increase the stretch. Remain watchful of client com-



### **Intercostal Muscle Stretch**

Client is lying on his side with his lower leg straight and upper leg bent. Therapist places one hand on hip, pins lower body in place. The other hand stretches the upper body by lifting the shoulder and arm up as the client inhales, holds breath three seconds, then slowly exhales as therapist releases pressure on the arm and hip. This helps stretch the intercostal muscles, strengthen the lungs and improve lung capacity. Repeat this procedure three to five times.

## A Golf Legend's Road To Recovery

Since becoming a professional golfer in 1960, Lee Trevino has established himself as one of the best golfers of his generation. But it sure appeared that his career was over in the summer of 1975, when he and two other players were struck by lightning playing the Western Open in Chicago. (For those superstitious *MTJ* readers, he was struck on Friday the 13th, at 3 p.m. on the 13th hole!)

As a result, Trevino had low-back operations in 1976 and 1983, and a plate in his throat after a 1994 neck operation. In 1990, Trevino was training for the Senior (now Champions) Tour. While in good shape, the constant traveling and workout had caused his body to tighten. In addition, a sore shoulder had been affecting his play, so he sought relief through massage therapy.

Since he started getting regular massages, he has fully recovered, and he credits massage therapy for playing a vital part in his physical comeback. Today, Trevino plays about 15 tournaments a year, plus corporate engagements. On the road 25 to 30 weeks a year, he practices and stretches daily to keep his muscles in perfect working condition.

### A Move To Massage

Trevino's decision to investigate massage was motivated by changes in his golf performance. He perceived that his swing had changed over the years. When a muscle has been injured or scar tissue is present, the muscle responds differently. Other muscles compensate to pick up the slack, which creates a problem because the muscles are then moving in ways they weren't designed to move. Scar tissue in Trevino's neck and low back locked down muscles, preventing them from moving properly. This changed his golf swing.

In the mid-1990s, someone at the Cooper Aerobic Center in Dallas referred Trevino to Virginia Brown. Trevino had sought relief with massage and other body-work therapies for years to ease the pain in his shoulder that appeared following the neck operation. He made an appointment to address his stubborn "rotator cuff" problem. According to Brown, Trevino's subscapularis and serratus anterior muscles were locked down, stuck, frozen. This is what affected the rotator cuff. Prior to touching the neck and shoulders, Brown employed reflexology to calm the body. This helped her work more quickly and more deeply.

Then, using a combination of muscle movement and deep tissue work, Brown began to break down and remove the impinging scar tissue in the fascia of the muscle. Freeing the fascia removed



Lee Trevino credits Virginia Brown with helping to prolong his career.

the tourniquet surrounding these muscles, allowing them to move freely and without pain.

After the session, Trevino was pain-free for the first time in seven years. "This therapy helped me make a full recovery from the effects of being struck by lightning and surgeries," he says.

Brown claims that, "As Lee regained flexibility in the neck, the low back improved. After working the quadratus lumborum, hip rotators and feet, his rotation is more fluid and natural. He now has full rotation in the neck."

Trevino continues his sessions to keep his muscles and fascia loose, to prevent scar tissue from reforming, and to prevent injury. "You get into trouble when the muscles get tight and other muscles 'take up' for that area and work as they were not designed to do. These techniques improved my performance and increased my longevity as a professional athlete," he says.

### Back On The Fairway

Today, Trevino's swing is fluid and powerful, even with a plate in his neck, and he attributes much of this to his massage regimen.

Other golfers, including PGA professional Cameron Doan, noticed how Trevino's swing improved.

Doan first met Trevino while attending the University of Texas–El Paso 15 years ago. The two men have remained friends through the years. Today, Doan is the head golf pro at Preston Trail Golf Club in Dallas, one of Texas' top private golf clubs. Trevino is also a member there, and plays frequently.

For the past 3½ years, Doan observed Trevino very closely. "Lee's style of golf swing requires him to rotate his torso quickly and completely—at least 115 to 120 degrees—in order to hit the ball. There are two areas I've noticed where Lee

has improved the most since his lightning accident and surgeries. First, his rotation on the forward side of the swing has increased by 10 to 15 degrees. Second, his legs are more aggressive. They show more speed and life in executing the shot," Doan says.

"Having experienced a lightning strike and multiple surgeries, and being 63 years of age, Lee's performance is outstanding," continues Doan, who cites Trevino as one of the best golfers of all time.

Doan also receives massages regularly. "In my own experience, I sometimes have trouble with my left arm," he says. "I feel an immediate increase in circulation in my arm after I have massage therapy. There is no question of the value of massage for golfers of any age or skill level."

—Paula Stone

## Torso /Iliotibial Tract (IT) Band Stretch

This procedure begins with the client sitting on the side of the table with his back to the therapist. Therapist has him turn first to the right while still in a sitting position, and begins to lower his body off the table, arms and head first. (Client is stretched across the table, feet and legs on one side, arms and head on the other side.)

Therapist places one hand between the shoulders, and one hand on the IT band area.

Then, the therapist instructs the client to resist his upper body, then lower extremities.

Repeat this several times, then therapist places the palm of one hand on hip area, and the other hand next to the spine in the shoulder area, and roll and stretch the tissue up and down the spine; repeat this several times. Have the client sit up and turn to the left, and repeat the procedure on the left side. This procedure stretches and loosens the entire torso, from shoulder to lumbar and from hip rotators to the end of the I.T. Band. This is not a procedure you can do on everyone. This is most helpful for professional athletes, and those who are physically fit.



fort. Jostle the shoulder and arm to relax the area. Reposition the fingers and repeat.

### Lower Body

When the lower body is locked down, rotation is impeded. The object is to loosen the pelvic areas and hip rotators using stretching and resistance exercises. The client controls the movement, which minimizes the risk of overstretching the client, and supports correct therapist body dynamics. Working the lower body loosens the sacroiliac and lumbar regions, quadratus lumborum and hip rotators to allow for a more full rotation.

With the client supine, the therapist begins by rocking the extended leg from side to side to increase blood flow and loosen the area. The object is to stretch the muscles in the lumbar and sacral areas. With the knee in raised position and foot flat on the table, the therapist places curled fingertips to pin the gluteus maximus where it attaches to the sacrum. The client abducts and adducts the knee to control the movement. This stretches the gluteus maximus. Reposition the fingers, moving up the spine. Repeat the procedure, each time moving the fingers up the spine. This loosens hip rotators. Rock the leg to relax the area as needed.

To continue loosening the pelvic area, follow with resistance exercises. The therapist's fingers isolate and pin a muscle. Supporting the client's leg, the client moves the leg to extend the hip while the therapist provides resistance. Continue to pin the muscle and reposition the therapist's arm to provide resistance while the client flexes, circumducts and outwardly rotates the hip.

A resistance/release exercise further releases tension in the pelvic and hip rotators. The therapist provides resistance to client movements intended to extend, flex, adduct and abduct the hip. The therapist pins the left leg to stabilize it. This prevents the client from using the left leg and hip to assist in the exercise. The client bends the knee and abducts the hip to rest the foot on the therapist's hip. The client then attempts to extend the leg while the therapist's body provides resistance.

With the leg remaining in position, the therapist places the forearm medially to the inner thigh above the knee to provide resistance for adduction. Place the forearm under the thigh above the knee to provide resistance for abduction. Place on top of the thigh above the knee to resist flexion.

Additional stretching occurs when the therapist pins the individual muscles of the medial thigh to provide further stretch of individual adductor muscles. The therapist is pinning the sartorius muscle where it attaches at the knee to increase the stretch.

The therapist completes each technique with effleurage strokes and flushing techniques. Effleurage strokes along the natural direction of muscle growth assist smooth regrowth of



## IT Band And Hamstring Loosener

Client is asked to lie on side with top knee bent, and lower knee straight, and foot resting on therapist's waist. This allows both of the therapist's hands to be free to work. The heel of one hand is placed along the IT band, and the other hand is free to work with the foot to obtain movement as the therapist works along the IT band. The therapist uses a forward motion rolling movement transverse across the IT band to loosen tissue, and allow more mobility. Therapist then moves to the hamstring area with the same procedure to gain more mobility in the hamstrings. It's important to note that the muscles are in a neutral position, and the limb is being moved to achieve the depth without so much discomfort as these areas are being worked.

muscle fibers. Flushing relaxes muscles and increases blood flow to further facilitate healing.

### Massage Therapy And Aging

We tend to heal more slowly and lose suppleness as we age. Massage assists the recovery process for active seniors by stimulating blood and nerve supply. Stretching prepares the body for activity, and is a part of self-care. For competitive and professional seniors, stretching and massage are essential, according to Deer and Trevino.

Watching other golfers' swings and ranges of flexibility, Trevino easily identifies who is getting bodywork and who is not. "Those who swing with their upper body only aren't getting help and taking care of themselves. You get hurt and do not play as well if you don't take care of yourself," he cautions.

"We don't have to lose flexibility and agility as we age. You can be both muscular and flexible," states Trevino, who is now 63, with a 38-inch waist, and powerful arms and shoulders. The senior athlete claims to feel better now than he has in years.

Remaining flexible is one of the keys to preventing losing height in later years, and also is necessary to achieve maximum distance when hitting a golf ball, he says. Gravity pulls on our bodies. Tight muscles compress and lock down bones. Compressed bones squeeze the spinal disks, causing fluid loss between the disks. Compressed bones also pull the body in different ways. "Stretching, exercise and massage keep us flexible and young as we age," Trevino adds.

### Advice From The Pros

Deer and Trevino receive massages on a regular basis, and recommend that people of all ages do so. For most active seniors, it's not too late to regain agility, balance, mobility and general overall performance enhancement through skilled therapy.

As in Deer's case, "The fact that I am approaching 60 should not be a factor in what I can do. I have the same fitness level of my much-younger peers. To get to that level of fitness, you have to train hard. Part of that process is recovery and preventive care. Massage therapy addresses both of these aspects," he says.

Trevino encourages active seniors and athletes to attend a daily regime of practice, stretching and exercise, water and good nutrition. Then get a massage regularly to restore health or maintain a healthy body. "Whether you are a young athlete early in your career or an active senior, you can avoid injury, retain flexibility and extend your career by adhering to a healthy regime," he emphasizes.

Deer is a big proponent of preventive care, beginning with children. Active kids sustain strains, tears and injuries from which they recover quickly and soon forget about. Inattention to injuries over a long period of time results in the buildup of scar tissue, restriction in fascia, shortened muscles and compensated body

mechanics. "I encourage children, teens and young adults to have massage therapy from someone skilled in this area," he says.

What about adults who are seeking therapy for the first time? The field of massage therapy is growing in the United States. Choices and selections of skilled touch are available in almost every part of the country. For many active seniors, this presents a golden opportunity to receive therapy for perhaps the first time. What to look for? What about cost?

For massage therapists hoping to specialize in sports massage for active seniors, training is essential for skilled touch. But so is intent. The body of knowledge is expanding at an incredible rate, as is the number of active seniors. Some therapists, even those with considerable experience, may be on the early side of the learning curve when it comes to active seniors. It comes down to chemistry and results, and sometimes money.

Massage and bodywork are not covered by Medicare and most insurance companies. Many seniors face the choice of self-funding their therapy, or going without. Deer has paid for all of his sessions to get the therapy he needs to sustain the workload of an active lifestyle. "I am astonished at my performance level," says Deer. It is the result of training, massage therapy and good nutrition."

Trevino agrees. "Champions do the right things," he says. "It shows. For example, Jack Nicklaus drank a half a cup of water at every hole. That's every 13 minutes. People thought he was resting. He was rehydrating and taking care of himself. He was a champion, and it showed throughout his career." ■

**Paula S. Stone, MA, NCTMB, MT, CR,** is the owner and director of Soft Touch Massage and Reflexology. Stone is a nationally licensed massage therapist and certified reflexologist at the International Institute of Reflexology. She practices therapeutic massage and reflexology, teaches and writes from the St. Louis area. She can be contacted at: stouchmassage@aol.com. Her phone number is: 636-724-8686.

### Sources Of Information

Virginia Brown may be contacted in Dallas at: 972-960-9111, or via E-mail at: vvb@virginiabrown.org. She also has a Web site, which is [www.virginiabrown.org](http://www.virginiabrown.org).

A resource for those aging clients wanting to become more active is the American Association of Retired Persons [[www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org)]. The organization's Web site provides straightforward step-by-step articles on how to set fitness goals, find time, design an exercise program and more. Links following each article lead to additional information.

The American College of Sports Medicine [[www.acsm.org](http://www.acsm.org)] offers advice on aspects of training and recovery for active people, regardless of their exercise program.

## Hip Rotator/Lumbar Sacral And Groin Release

Client's foot and ankle are placed on therapist's shoulder, knee bent. This allows the therapist freedom of using both hands while obtaining movement and keeping the muscles in a neutral position. In this procedure therapist uses one hand to pin tissue in lumbar sacral area, as the client uses the leg for leverage to stretch and loosen the tissues.

The therapist then moves the working hand to gluteal area to pin and curl fingers as the leg is being stretched and moved side to side for leverage. As the lumbar sacral and the hip rotator area loosens, it allows greater mobility in the groin area. Therapist should then do some resist/release exercises by holding the hand or forearm in the hamstring area, and asking the client to press and release his leg. This helps strengthen the lumbar sacral area, as well as the hip rotators and hamstrings. Repeat this several times, followed by medial and lateral hip rotations.

