How to Care for Yourself When you Can’t Get a Massage

In pain and can’t get a massage? Stuck between appointments and need some relief? Here are six lines of defense to manage your symptoms before your next appointment.

Self massage techniques

Have a tennis ball laying around the house? What about a lacrosse ball? A golf ball? Any of these will do when using them as massage tools on sore and painful muscles.

**For sore backs:**

Use a lacrosse or tennis ball to work on sore back muscles by leaning against it on a wall. You can pin the ball between your body and the wall and roll against it to provide relief to sore muscles and trigger points.

**For sore hips:**

Sit on a tennis ball or lacrosse ball on the ground or a firm chair to release tight hip and glute muscles.

**For sore feet:**

Place a golf ball or tennis ball on the floor. Roll the ball under the arch of your foot to release sore muscles in your feet.

Stretching and Movement

Have you been stretching the affected area? Stretches should be slow, without pain, and held for 30 seconds. Stretch in the morning and before bed.

Have you moved your body in the last hour or two? If not, stand up and take a break by moving your body and changing up what you are doing. Walking and stretching are two ways of incorporating movement that is gentle and low impact.

Hydrotherapy

Use heat packs like magic bags, electric heating pads, and hot water bottles on sore tired muscles. Heat will increase blood flow and help to relax muscles. Don’t ever fall asleep with a heating product on you. Don’t use heat if you have an inflammatory condition that is causing your pain.

Hydration

How much water have you been drinking on average? Proper hydration helps to keep our bodies functioning and moving well. The average adults daily water intake should be between 2 and 3 litres per day depending on their activity levels.

Sleep

How many hours of sleep are you getting per night? Though eight hours of sleep is the common recommendation, many people get by on less. Our body heals and reboots during our sleep cycle, so make sure that you are getting enough per night. Can’t increase your nightly hours of sleep? Napping has been proven to have many health benefits.

Reduce Stress

Stress has a direct impact on our body by increasing cortisol levels and perceived pain. Unnecessary stress can lower our usual pain tolerance levels and make dealing with pain harder. Meditation, exercise, decluttering our calendar, and decreasing demands placed on us can decrease stress. Take a break if you are able and do something that takes your mind off of your stress.