



The Benefits of Deep Tissue and Therapeutic Massage.



With Stephen Kinnane, Wakefield Sports Clinic Remedial Massage Therapist

Massage is the manipulation of muscle and connective tissue to enhance the function of those tissues and promote relaxation and well-being. Some different types of massage include Therapeutic/Relaxation, Remedial, Sports, and Post Surgical.

Massage therapy aims to help create the best physical and mental state possible for the client which then allows them to achieve their best results in their chosen endeavours. Massage Therapy is a skilled technique of manual manipulation of the soft tissues with therapeutic benefits to the circulatory, nervous, and lymphatic systems.

Five main uses of massage

1. Reduce muscle tension
2. Reduce stress
3. Promote Health
4. Promote Fitness
5. Increase blood circulation.

Blood has two major functions in the body, to supply nutrients, water and oxygen to the body, and to remove toxins and carbon dioxide from the body. By increasing blood flow to muscle and other soft tissue, the rate of exchange between tissue and blood is accelerated. Faster healing times from injuries such as muscle tears, sprains or strains allow clients to get back to normal life much faster than would normally be possible. Massage also helps increase the lymph system (increased immunity), nervous system (increased agility and body awareness), and helps to break up adhesions which develop from muscle stress from sporting activities.

Muscle adhesions within muscle fibres often slow blood circulation and make the muscle fibres affected much weaker than normal. Weaker muscles cause other muscles to work harder and the body has a tendency to become imbalanced. This imbalance and muscle overload often leads to the occurrence of 'trigger points' in and around the site of the adhesions.

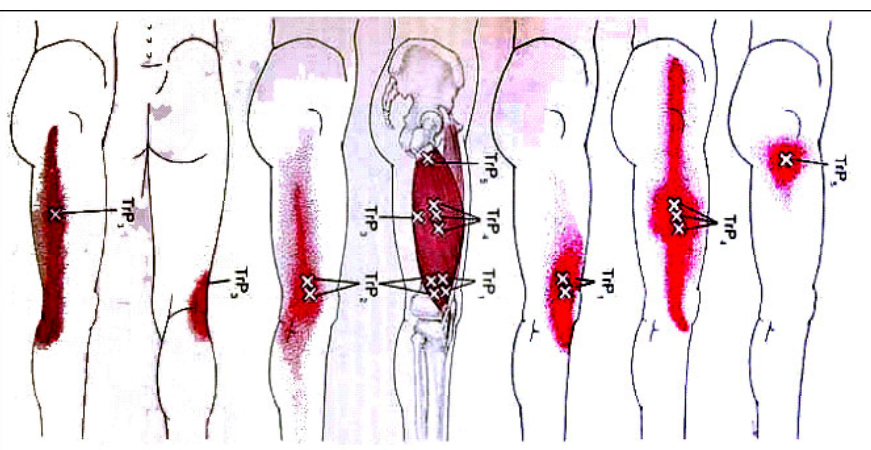
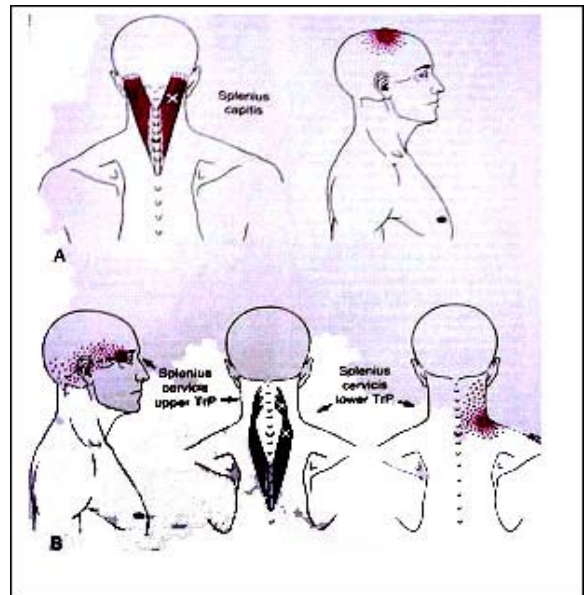
Trigger Points

The term 'trigger point' gets thrown around loosely and many people don't understand what trigger points truly are. Many people think a trigger point is just a tight sore muscle. A **Trigger Point** is a taut band of muscle fibres within a skeletal muscle that **refers pain**.

Some classic referral pains caused by trigger points are headaches and lateral knee pain. Possible sites for trigger points are marked as X's in these two diagrams and the trigger point referral pain is shown branching out from the trigger point site. Trigger points can be caused by muscle tissue being overloaded, stressed, or weak and quite often a combination of all three.

Headaches often stem from trigger points located in the upper back or neck. Office workers and labourers who lift heavy equipment and need to look up for much of their work often have these trigger points occur. An example is shown right.

Another classic site for trigger point referral pain is the lateral knee. Trigger points present in the quadriceps and hip muscles are often the cause of such pain. Hip and quadriceps trigger points are often seen in cyclists, runners and a lot of sports people such as netballers and footballers. An example of these trigger points is shown below.



Treatment of trigger points is quite simply the process of finding the site of the trigger point and applying pressure to this area. A great deal of relief often follows the use of trigger point therapy because the referral pain subsides and muscle tension is alleviated. Once again blood flow is increased, nutrients are absorbed faster and toxins are removed far quicker than normal. Trigger points can occur within any

skeletal muscle and therefore referral pain can be found all over the body from head to toe. If you are getting any pain it is a good idea to have a massage therapist check to see if trigger points are the reason for your pain.

Massage Therapy is going to benefit everyone but those of you who are specifically tight, sore, and stressed from sport, work, and general life are most likely to benefit and see great results. For anyone who gets massage please continue as often as necessary and for anyone who has never tried massage, it could be the best thing you have done for your tight, sore muscles.

Five Great Reasons to get a Massage

1. **Relieve Pain** - Massage is a natural pain relief
2. **Reduce Stress** - Less stress means more energy
3. **Improve Performance** - Be all that you can be
4. **Increase Self Awareness** - Become one with the body that is you
5. **Improve Health and Vitality** - Would you like to be sickness free?

Stephen currently takes sessions at our Mount Barker clinic. To make an appointment with Stephen, call 8391 4160.