

www.albertashowjumpers.com

For Albertans About Albertans

Why Massage? By Tina Watkins



Why Massage?

Massage therapy is a highly recognized method of healing. References to massage therapy can be found in medical resources dated nearly 4000 years ago. Hippocrates, known as the 'Father of Medicine', referenced massage therapy in the 4th century B.C. when he wrote: "The physician must be acquainted with many things, and assuredly with rubbing."

In the modern day, in addition to "rubbing," massage therapy – often referred to as 'Bodywork' or 'Somatic Therapy' – refers to the application of various techniques to the muscular structure and soft tissues of the body. These techniques include applying fixed or movable pressure, holding, vibration, rocking, friction, kneading and compression. These techniques primarily utilize a therapist's hands, although some therapists do use other areas of the body including their forearms, elbows and feet. All techniques are used to benefit the musculoskeletal, circulatory-lymphatic, nervous, and other systems of the body. In addition to the benefits directly related to body systems, massage therapy positively influences the overall health and well-being of each client.

Horses are very tactile creatures and we benefit enormously though being familiar with their bodies. An equine massage therapist can often detect lameness and disease before they become too debilitating. This can allow for earlier treatment with a greater opportunity for a full recovery.

For the working horse, massage improves:

- Smooth Muscle Function
- Lymph System/Drainage
- Circulation
- Range of Motion
- Stamina
- Recovery

Physical and Mental Benefits:

- relaxes the whole body
- loosens tight muscles
- relieves tired and aching muscles
- increases flexibility and range of motion
- diminishes chronic pain
- calms the nervous system
- lowers blood pressure
- lowers heart rate
- enhances skin tone
- assists in recovery from injuries and illness
- strengthens the immune system
- reduces mental stress
- improves concentration
- promotes restful sleep
- aids in mental relaxation