Benefits of a massage can help with well-being as well as performance towards the torso. This action mechanically flushes out the metabolites produced during training by our muscles towards the liver to be assimilated and removed from our system.

Psychology
It has been shown that massage helps athletes feel a greater sense of recovery. In a small study, amateur boxers who receive a massage showed significantly increased perceptions of recovery as compared to a period of passive rest. This means that you will feel more ready for your next hard session.

Relaxation
A study done with the trigger point (TP) method of massage showed that TP massage decreases your heart rate, blood pressure and increases parasympathetic activity (a component of our nervous system which promotes rest and recovery) after the therapy. This means you will feel more relaxed and calm after each session.

Flexibility
Massage can help lengthen the muscle fibres, allowing them to become relaxed and flexible. A New Zealand case study showed that the sit and reach distance can increase by up to 77mm after six weeks of once-a-week massages. However, one must also ask if the athlete does his own stretches himself daily.

Soreness
A post-race massage such as those provided at huge running events in Singapore can help reduce the occurrence or severity of delayed onset muscle soreness (DOMs).

Massage can also be incorporated into your training programme as a component of recovery. As the name suggests, the onset of such muscle soreness is delayed – meaning you are fine the day after a race but you may suffer severe body aches two or three days later. You may wonder if it was actually the race that caused you such pain. In a study, athletes were made to do 10 sets of arm exercises, followed by 10 minutes of massage on one arm and the other receiving no treatment – results showed massage reduced significantly the onset of DOMs.

When to get one
You should not get a massage at least 24 hours before any major race as muscles need some time to rest and recover after a massage session. Two or three days before a race is a good time to get a massage to loosen up and get ready. Massage can also be incorporated into your training programme as a component of recovery. If you have the time and can afford it, once every two to three weeks is a good frequency.

Keep up with the training and pamper yourself with a massage!

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