



## Massage Self-Care Corner

# (Almost) Anywhere, Anytime!

By **Judith DeLany**

Modern times have presented us with ever-expanding duties in all corners of our lives. Most of us wear multiple hats as practitioners, teachers, providers, partners, parents and even as caregivers for our own parents or friends. We are constantly challenged to effectively manage our time and money within a world that seems to be closing in around us. Often the easiest solution is to neglect ourself by omitting exercise, nutritious food, and “downtime” – or sometimes all of these! The occasional sacrifice soon becomes part of the lifestyle with “no time,” “no money” and “no space” being daily themes.

As a single mother and a family provider, my own juggling act is a three-ring circus. On top of duties of home, parenting and office, I also co-author referenced neuromuscular therapy (NMT) textbooks, which requires sitting several hours each day to edit, type or read. I also travel extensively for seminars and conventions, which requires sitting on planes, sleeping in hotel beds and being distant from my usual exercise routine. These combinations constantly challenge any attempts to stay fit and offer “valid excuses” for failure.

Good tone in the upper body, as well as the trunk and legs, is needed to prevent injury, especially in the face of the daily demands of our work. Elastic bands offer a great choice for resistance

work, especially in the small confines of an office, hotel room or other location where training equipment is not available. They are small (and light) enough to tuck into a desk drawer, luggage or purse, assuring that they are always nearby. Got two minutes to spare? Perform a few reps of one or two exercises. By the end of the day, a routine is done and accomplished in minutes that would have been wasted otherwise.

Because of the growing concerns of latex allergies, I recommend and use latex-free resistance bands, which come in varying degrees of resistance. Exercises suggesting appropriate use are available on the Web free of charge. Further, practitioners, whose scope of practice does not allow for exercise recommendations, can send clients to these Web sites!

Getting-started tip: Make a short list on index cards or

print out several simple exercises from a Web site that can be done in your available space in 1-2 minutes. Place the list and one exercise band in a reclosable bag (to keep them together) and tuck it into a spot where it will be handy when there are a couple of minutes to spare (in a purse, briefcase, carry-on or beach bag). Placing these bags in several handy locations increases the probability of completion.

A varied atmosphere makes it more interesting and the “no excuse” attitude helps you to see possibilities that were actually there all along. Let your imagination run loose and you might discover time for pectoralis flies on a boat, biceps curls at a guardrail in the park, or triceps extensions at the beach.


Technique tips:

- Use a sturdy support, such as a guardrail,

around which to loop the band for steady resistance.

- Securely hold onto the non-moving end of the band to avoid injury.
- Isolate individual muscles as part of a routine in order to avoid chronic muscle substitution for those that are weak.
- Incorporate practice functional movements that encourage coordination of synergists and simulate practical activities used in daily life.

Make those spare minutes in your life all about you.

How creative can you be? 

**Judith DeLany** serves as director of NMT Center, writes textbooks for Elsevier Health Sciences, and lectures internationally in the field of neuromuscular therapy. For more information regarding her work, visit [www.nmtcenter.com](http://www.nmtcenter.com) or call (866) 571-7942.

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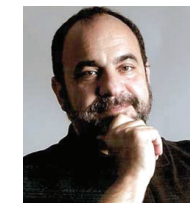
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