

**St Margaret's**  
Hospice Care

## **Lymphoedema Service**

**Simple lymphatic drainage massage (SLD)  
for head & neck lymphoedema**



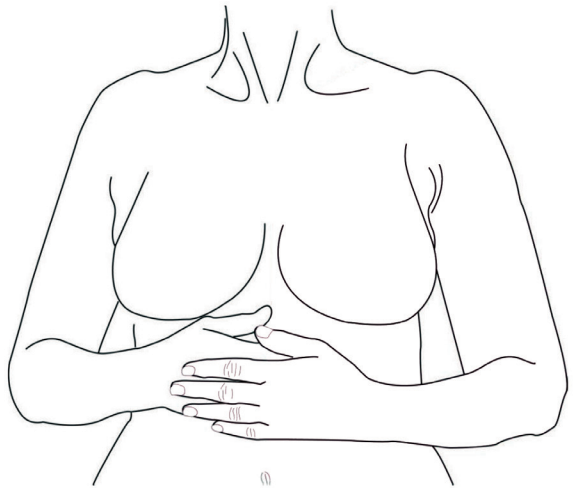
## Introduction

Simple lymphatic drainage (SLD) is a special form of massage used to help people with lymphoedema and is based on the principles of manual lymphatic drainage. The aim of SLD is to move lymph fluid to areas of the body where it can drain away more easily.

- The massage should be gentle and light, just enough pressure to move the skin and not cause any redness. Slow and rhythmical with your hand relaxed and done on bare skin, not over clothes, and do not use any oils or creams
- You should spend about 15-20 minutes doing the massage, twice a day
- Make sure you are in a comfortable position, lying or sitting is best and in a quiet place where you won't be disturbed
- It is fine for someone else to help you with the massage if you wish

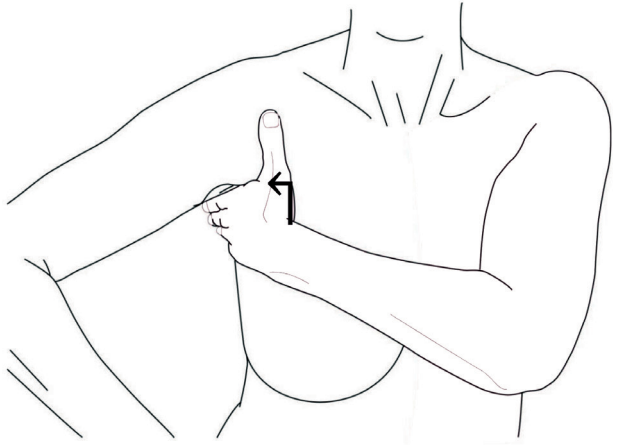
## Step 1 - Breathing

- Sit or lie down with your shoulders relaxed and hands resting below your ribs
- Breathe in and feel your abdomen rising (imagine a balloon inflating under your hands)
- Slowly breathe out and press gently inwards with your hands
- Repeat 5 times



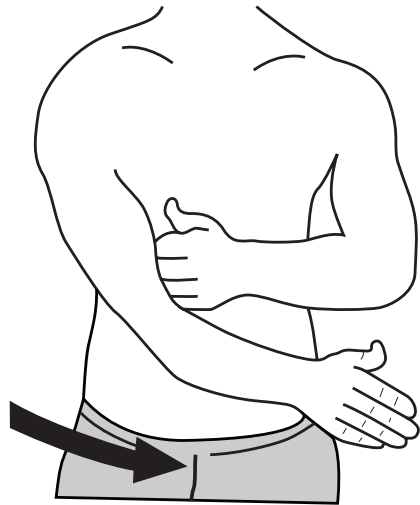
## Step 2 - Axilla

- Place your hand in the armpit
- Massage upwards into your armpit and release (10 times)
- Ensure the direction is always upwards
- Repeat both sides



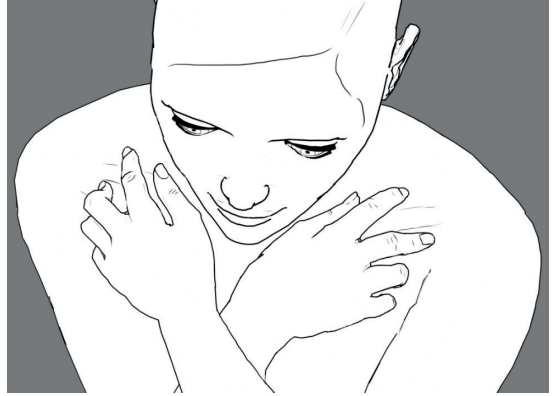
## Alternative clearance technique

- Place one hand in your armpit
- Cross the other arm across your body towards your opposite hip
- Repeat 10 times on both sides



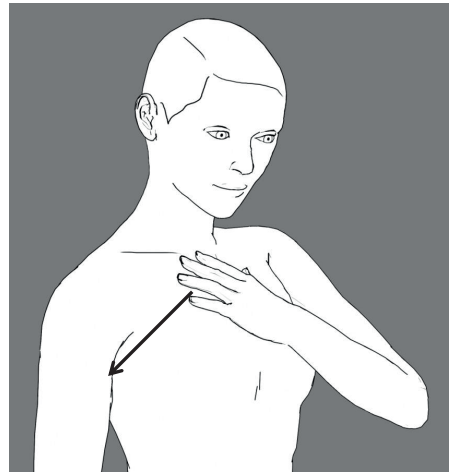
## Step 3 - Collarbone

- Place your index finger above, and your middle finger below your collarbone, so that the collarbone lies between these two fingers
- Gently push downwards and release
- Repeat 10 times on both sides



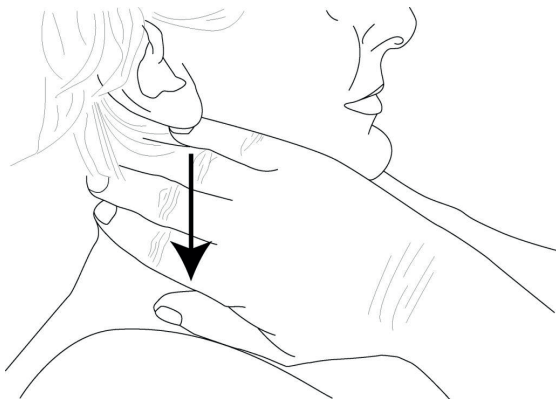
## Step 4 - Chest

- Using the flat of your hand, gently stroke downwards from your collarbone to your armpit
- Repeat 10 times
- Repeat on both sides



## Step 5 - Neck

- Place your hands on both side of your neck below your ears
- Gently stroke the skin down towards your collarbones and release
- Repeat this movement 10 times



## Step 6 - Face

- Start at your chin and gently stroke your skin towards your ears
- Repeat 10 times
- Repeat across your face, starting next to your mouth and stroke towards your ears
- Repeat at nose level
- If necessary, repeat across your forehead
- Repeat on BOTH sides
- Can stroke whole face if you want to and find easier!



## Step 7

- Finish SLD by stroking skin from ears to axillas (Repeat step 5, followed by step 4, followed by step 2)
- Deep breathing exercise as for step 1 can be repeated

Your specialist may provide some compression for you to wear which is recommended after completing this massage.

If you have any concerns please contact the clinic where a member of our team will be there to help you.

### Your notes

**Your notes**

**St Margaret's Hospice Care Taunton Hospice,**  
Heron Drive, Bishops Hull, Taunton, TA1 5HA

 01823 333822

**St Margaret's Hospice Care Yeovil Hospice,**  
Little Tarrat Lane, Yeovil, BA20 2HU

 01935 709480

 [somicb.lym-smh@nhs.net](mailto:somicb.lym-smh@nhs.net)

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St Margaret's Hospice Care is committed to taking your privacy seriously and protecting your personal information. If you want to know more about how we use your data go on the 'privacy statement' on our website or ask for a copy of this information via [info@st-margarets-hospice.org.uk](mailto:info@st-margarets-hospice.org.uk)

Please note all incoming and outgoing calls may be recorded for training and quality purposes.

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