

St Margaret's
Hospice Care

Lymphoedema Service

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



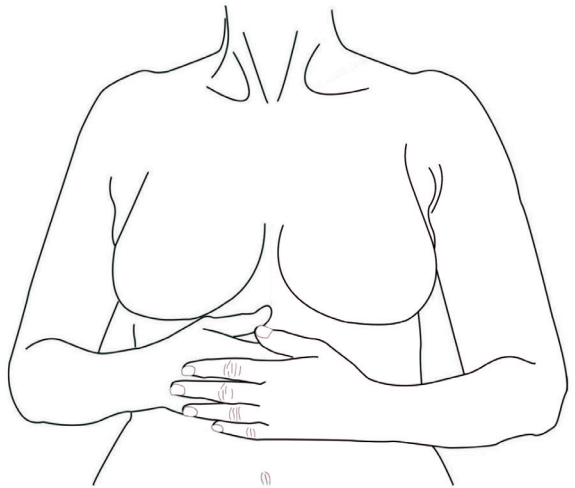
Introduction

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

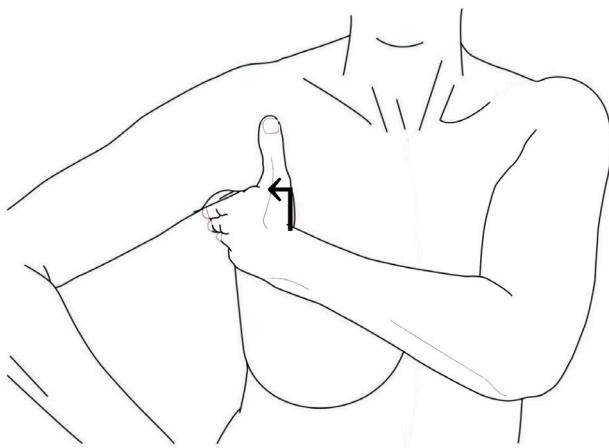
Step 1 - Breathing

- 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



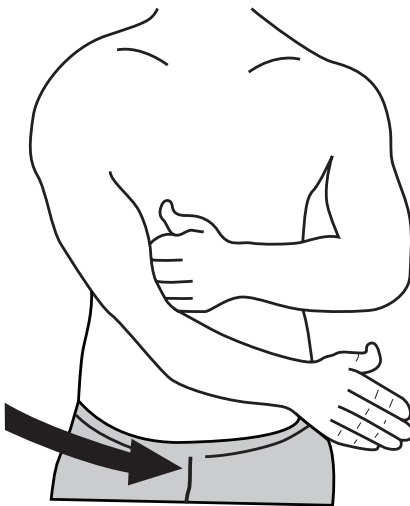
Step 2 - Axilla

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



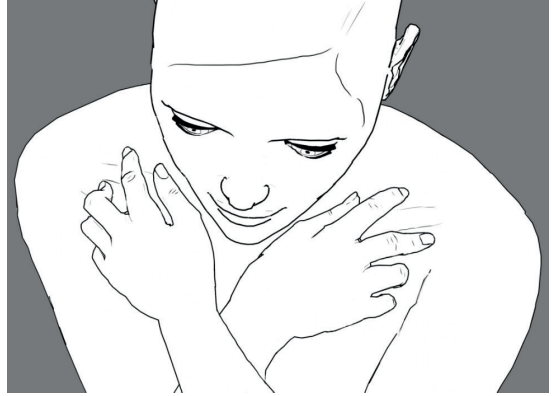
Alternative clearance technique

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



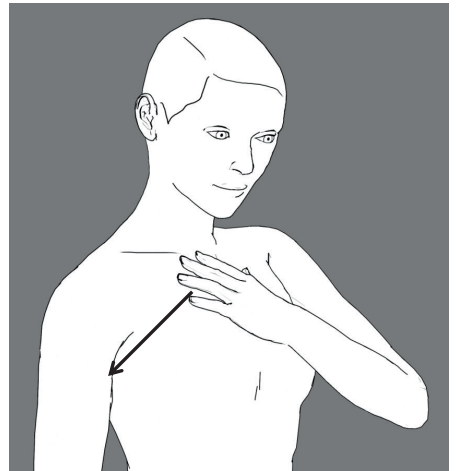
Step 3 - Collarbone

- 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



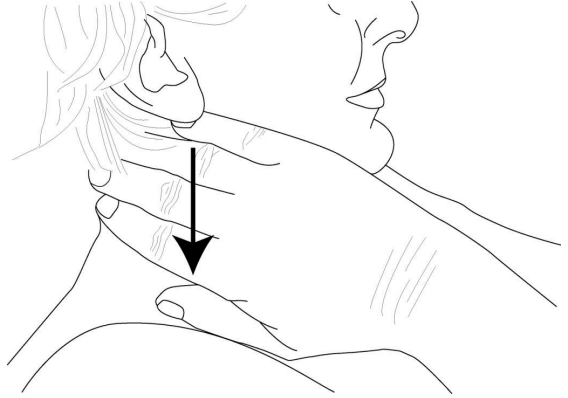
Step 4 - Chest

- 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

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