

Lymphedema Therapy

Self-Manual Lymphatic Drainage for the Left Upper Extremity

Self-MLD should be performed several times a week prior to your home exercise program to create new drainage pathways and should be followed by appropriate compression therapy if needed. The techniques and sequences below may vary from those demonstrated by your therapist. The techniques may be adjusted to accommodate specific requirements.

To stimulate the lymph nodes:

1. While lying flat or sitting up, place your fingertips above the collarbone as shown below. Make small circles in towards your neck. The pressure applied should be a gentle skin stretch. Do both right and left side.



2. Bring one knee to your chest and then straight out 10 times. Repeat with other leg 10 times.
3. On your **right side** in the underarm, gently make small circles upwards and in towards the body using the entire palm of your hand. This stimulates the lymph nodes in preparation to receive fluid.



4. On your **left** side, place your palm in the crease of your groin and again gently make small circles up and in towards the body. This stimulates these lymph nodes as well in preparation to receive fluid. (Picture shows right sided stimulation)



5. Take 10 deep breaths, making sure your belly is rising with each breath in, to stimulate your abdominal lymph nodes. (Breathe in through your nose, breathe out through your mouth).



Moving fluid to your unaffected side: Repeat each step 10 times

6. Place palm of your right hand in the middle of your chest and gently stroke straight across toward the **right** underarm.
7. Now place your right palm closer to the **left** underarm and gently stroke straight across toward the **right** underarm.
8. On the outside of your **left arm**, gently stroke from the middle of your upper arm up to the shoulder and across your chest toward your **right** underarm.
9. Place your hand on your **left** elbow. Stroke up the outside of the arm to the shoulder, then across the chest to the right underarm. Repeat, but start on the inside of your elbow, moving up the shoulder and across the chest.
10. Stroke from your wrist toward the outside of your elbow. Repeat on the inside of your wrist and stroke toward the inside of your elbow.
11. Stroke the back of the affected hand toward the outside of your elbow.
12. With your finger and thumb, gently stroke each finger of the affected hand to the base of the finger and continue up the back of the hand moving slowly toward the outside elbow.
13. Now that you have cleared your arm from the chest to the fingers, slowly move back up the affected arm following the same route in reverse (steps #12-6). **Perform only 3 times to re-work the pathways you just opened.**

Trunk MLD: Repeat 10 times

14. With the palm of your right hand, stroke downward from the waist of your **left** side toward the groin area.
15. Place your palm on your **left** side, starting at the side of your chest, and gently stroke downward toward the **left** groin area.
16. Now stroke downward from your **left** underarm toward the **left** groin area.
17. Repeat step 15 and then step 14. Perform only 3 times.

Re-Stimulate the lymph nodes: 10 times

18. Stimulate the lymph nodes in the groin, under right arm, and in the neck (Repeat steps # 1, 3, 4, and 5). Take 10 deep breaths to stimulate the abdominal lymph nodes and take a few minutes to relax.