

## **Lymphedema Therapy**

### **Self-Manual Lymphatic Drainage for Bilateral Lower Extremities**

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. Gently make circles with the palm of your hand in towards the body. Do both sides.



2. With knees bent and feet flat, place the palm of your hand on your lower abdomen and make small “scoop” movements toward your belly button. Repeat 10 times and then repeat on the opposite side of your lower abdomen.
3. Repeat on both sides on your upper abdomen, scooping down towards your belly button.

4. Take 10 deep breaths, making sure your belly is rising with each breath in (breathe in through your nose, out through your mouth).



5. Bring one knee to your chest and then straight out 10 times. Repeat with other leg 10 times.
6. In your **right and left** groin, make circles using the palm of your hand upward and in towards the body (**Perform only if you have primary lymphedema, your therapist will advise you**)



7. On your **both right and left side** in the underarm, gently make small circles upward and in towards the body using the entire palm of your hand. This stimulates the lymph nodes in preparation to receive fluid.



8. Place palm of your left hand on your right side, starting at the side of the chest, and gently stroke upward towards the right underarm. Repeat on left side of the body.
9. Now stroke upwards from your right waist toward the right underarm. Repeat on left side
10. Continue strokes upward from the outside of your right hip toward the right underarm. Repeat on left side.
11. Begin at the top of both thighs with the palms of your hands and gently and slowly stroke from the inside of the thighs to the outside of the thighs and then upward toward the waist.
12. Move to the mid-thighs and continue stroking from inside of both thighs, toward the outside of the thighs and then upward toward the waist.
13. Slowly move down the legs in sections making sure you cover the entire surface area of the leg and moving the fluid toward the outside of the thighs and moving toward both underarms. (You do not have to go to the underarms each time)
  - a. Start at both knees, stroking from inside of the knees, to outside of the knees, then upward toward the waist
  - b. Repeat the same for both calves
  - c. Repeat the same for both ankles
14. Stroke the base of the right foot and toes with slow strokes upward to the lateral leg. Repeat on left foot.
15. Repeat steps in reverse, numbers 14-8, but only perform **3 times to re-work the pathways you just opened.**

### **Stimulate the lymph nodes: 10 times**

16. Stimulate the lymph nodes in the groin, under both arms, and in the neck (Repeat steps # 1, 6, and 7). Take 10 deep belly breaths to stimulate the abdominal lymph nodes and take a few minutes to relax.