



Lymphatic Drainage Massage-Explained

EZen Blog by Holly Potter, L.E., L.M.T.

Many of you that receive bodywork from me have noticed I have been often incorporating more of Lymphatic massage into your bodywork. In this blog, I'll go over how the lymph works, why you should receive Lymphatic drainage massage, and what to expect during a session. So, let's take a minute to explore this form of very helpful bodywork.

Let's start with how the lymph system works. This very important body system is a collection of organs, ducts and nodes. It is closely tied with the circulatory system, and can assist in distributing fluid to assist in healing during injury (cuts and bruises). Primarily, the lymphatic system has a major role in helping the immune system, by removing cellular waste, debris, dead blood cells and toxins. It also absorbs fat soluble vitamins from the digestive system and transports them throughout the body where nourishment is needed. Lymph is a clear to yellowish liquid, which flows throughout the body like blood—but with one major difference. Unlike blood, which travels through the body in a loop, lymph travels in small vessels only in one direction (upward). And, unlike the blood circulatory system, there is no pump to move the lymph. Which is precisely why targeted lymphatic drainage massage can be so beneficial! (more on that in a minute) As you can see, the lymphatic system plays an amazing role in our bodies, and without it, we wouldn't be able to survive!

With all this in mind, why would you want to receive lymphatic massage? As I mentioned, lymph only travels in one direction, through very small vessels. I'm guessing you already know where I'm going with this...as a result of these two scenarios, the lymphatic system becomes clogged.

What are some symptoms of a sluggish lymphatic system? Know the "sock mark" you get around the ankles you get after a long day? The tight wedding ring? Those are telltale symptoms. Other symptoms are bloating, dry itchy skin, joint stiffness (especially first thing in the morning), breast tenderness, and frequent colds. By receiving lymphatic massage, many of these symptoms can resolve rather quickly! How? By moving the lymphatic fluid, we are able to break up the congested fluid to create proper flow. Think of your lymph as a flowing river, and by receiving lymph massage, you are breaking up the "dams" that block flow along the way. Literally, it's that simple!

Lymphatic massage can help with many conditions, including edema, chronic pain (the type that feels "heavy" in the body), allergies & sinus issues, varicose veins, acne, cellulite, anxiety (by regulating the nervous system), and much more.

So, let's move on to what you can expect during a lymphatic massage session. A lymphatic drainage massage session is performed on a heated table, and like traditional massage, you are undressed to your level of comfort. The biggest difference is in technique. Unlike Swedish or Deep Tissue massage, lymphatic drainage massage is performed using a light, rhythmic pumping technique, in the direction of the lymph nodes. In fact, many people often fall asleep during a lymphatic massage session! Why the light pressure? As we mentioned earlier, the lymph flows through very small vessels. As we are seeking to

LYMPHATIC DRAINAGE INFO

LYMPH VESSELS CARRY 75% OF THE WASTE REJECTED BY OUR CELLS.

THIS CAN LEAD TO WATER RETENTION, CELLULITE, EXHAUSTION, STRETCH-MARKS, AND SWOLLEN ANKLES.

IF LYMPH BEGINS TO CIRCULATE POORLY DUE TO BLOCKAGES, VITAL FUNCTIONS BECOME IMPAIRED.

WHEN THE BODY STORES TOO MUCH FAT, THE FATTY CELLS BECOME LARGE, CONSTRICTING BLOOD AND LYMPH VESSELS.

THIS "BLOCKAGE" PREVENTS THE DRAINAGE OF WATER AND TOXINS.

UNFORTUNATELY, THIS PHENOMENON IS ESPECIALLY COMMON IN THE THIGHS AND BUTTOCKS REGIONS.

LYMPHATIC DRAINAGE CAN HELP PATIENTS HEAL AFTER SURGERY BY REDUCING SWELLING AND DETOXYFING THE BODY.

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encourage a flow, or opening of the vessels, a light pressure with targeted direction encourages opening of these vessels, while deep, quick pressure can create collapse. I'd like to add that once the vessels are open and the lymph is flowing, deep tissue can have FANTASTIC results...I often combine both of these in my bodywork sessions!

How to
Detoxify your
Lymphatic
System
and Why You Should



Lymphatic massage can be applied to the full body, or just targeted areas. As each body is different and has different needs, so is each session.

I hope that this blog gave you some insight on just a few of the many ways lymphatic massage can be of benefit. As the owner of Everything Zen, I am here not only to provide a healing, therapeutic bodywork session, but to educate you. If you have any questions, you can reach me at (860) 861-8978, or at everything.zenmassage@gmail.com. I am here to help!

Holly Potter is the Owner of Everything Zen, and has been practicing massage therapy since 2008. She opened Everything Zen in 2009 with a vision to educate and empower people on their journey to holistic health. Holly is available by appointment Tuesday-Saturday, and can be reached via phone at 860-861-8978, or email at everything.zenmassage@gmail.com.

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