

Head and neck simple lymphatic drainage (SLD)

(Adapted from the Lymphoedema Network Wales guidelines and based on the Casley-Smith method of Manual Lymphatic Drainage)

Other formats

If you need this information in another format such as audio CD, Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language please contact the PALS desk on 01271 314090 or at ndht.pals@nhs.net.

This very gentle massage is part of the daily treatment for your swelling. It helps move the fluid from a swollen area to one that drains more freely. Your therapist will teach you how to do SLD and this leaflet will remind you how to do it.

If you are unable to perform the massage by yourself, a partner or carer could help you.

What to do

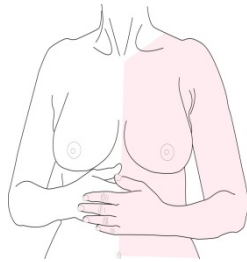
- Massage very slowly and gently. It should take about 20 minutes to complete
- Massage when you are comfortable; sitting or lying down is best
- Do not press too hard
- Creams and oils are not needed. If you are hot and sticky, a small amount of talc can be used
- Do not massage over an area that is very painful
- If you notice any new or unexplained lumps/changes, please contact your GP or specialist therapist immediately
- If you have had radiotherapy, you need to wait for 6 weeks before you start the massage over that area
- If you have cellulitis, do not do SLD until you are better

The following steps are for swelling on both sides of your head, face and/or neck.

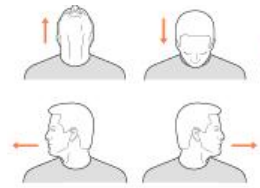
Step 1 – Breathing

The start of SLD is very important and involves abdominal breathing:

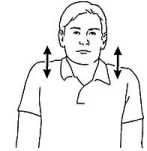
- Place both hands on your stomach
- Breathe in and feel your stomach rising (imagine a balloon inflating under your hands)
- Slowly breathe out and press gently inwards with your hands
- Repeat five times

**Step 2 – Specific exercises (5 to 10 of each)**

1. Look up then down, look left then right (repeat five times)



2. Lift shoulders and lower



3. Roll shoulders forwards, then backwards

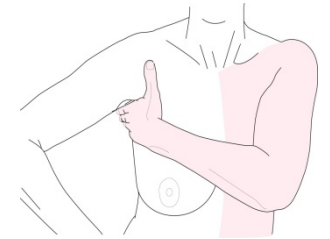
**Step 2 – Specific exercises (continue)**

4.

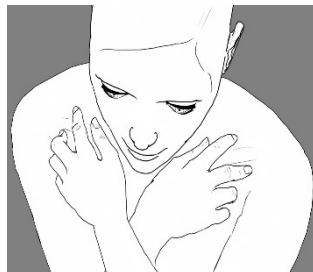
- Place your hand in your armpit
- Cross the other arm across your body towards your opposite hip
- Repeat 10 times on both sides

**Alternative to Step 2, point 4**

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

**Step 4 – Collarbones**

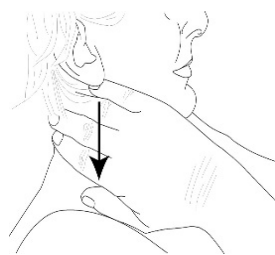
- Place your index finger above, and your middle finger below your collarbone, so that the collarbone lies between these two fingers.
- Gently push downwards and release
- Repeat 10 times on both sides

**Step 5 – Chest**

- Using the flat part of your fingers, gently stroke downwards from your RIGHT collarbone to your right armpit. Now repeat on LEFT side.
- Repeat 10 times on both sides

**Step 6 – Neck**

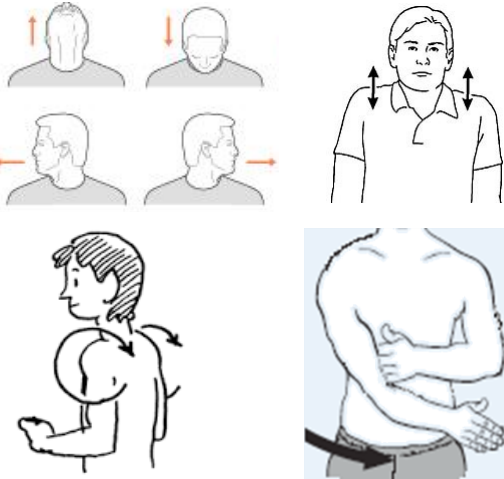
- Place your hands on both sides of your neck below your ears
- Gently stroke the skin down towards your collarbones and release
- Repeat this movement 10 times

**Step 7 – Face**

- Start at your chin and gently stroke your skin towards your ears and then down your neck towards your armpit
- Repeat 10 times
- Repeat across your face, starting next to your mouth and stroke towards your ears and then down the neck
- Repeat at nose level
- Repeat both sides



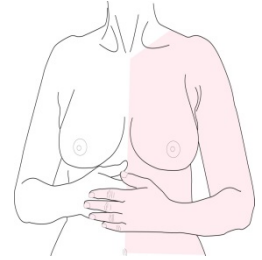
Step 8 – Repeat **specific exercises** as in Step 2 (5 to 10 of each)



Step 9 – Breathing

Finish the SLD with the abdominal breathing as in Step 1:

- Place both hands on your stomach. Breathe in and feel your stomach rising (imagine a balloon inflating under your hands)
- Slowly breathe out and press gently inwards with your hands
- Repeat 5 times.



PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern call 01271 314090 or email ndht.pals@nhs.net. You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple.

Have your say

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

'Care Opinion' comments forms are on all wards or online at www.careopinion.org.uk.

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust
 Raleigh Park, Barnstaple
 Devon EX31 4JB
 Tel. 01271 322577
www.northdevonhealth.nhs.uk

© Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust
 This leaflet was designed by the Communications Department.
 Tel: 01271 313970 / email: ndht.contactus@nhs.net