



Love Your Lymph!

The Lymphatic System

The lymphatic system is key to our health and vitality, and the lymph vessels and nodes are part of the body's immune system. The lymphatic system is your body's built-in sanitation center; it is the plumbing that collects, carries and "cleans" waste material from every cell, tissue and organ such as bacteria, viruses, toxins, "invaders" - anything that is not useful or helpful to the human body. Lymph vessels contain white blood cells to help fight infections.

The lymphatic system lives and works side by side with the circulatory system, but it only moves in one direction, and it moves much more SLOWLY than our cardiovascular system. So, it needs your help every day to pump, pump, pump!

How to Stimulate Your Lymphatic System

1. Breathe: Take a few minutes for deep diaphragmatic breathing - the diaphragm is a lymphatic pump in itself and it compresses your most vital organs to release stale blood, O₂, energy and lymph so fresh nutrients can flow in!

2-3 times a day, lie on your back, bend your knees with your feet on the ground, and place your hands on your lower abdomen, and then your diaphragm, and then your sternum and BREATHE. Breathe in and out of your nose. Inhale for 1-2-3 Exhale 1-2-3 . . . Can you count up to 4 or 5? The last few exhales, really open up your mouth and LET THAT BREATH GO!

Your breathwork will help calm anxiety, lower cortisol levels, and balance your pH.

2. Cat/Cow pose: This yoga pose helps to engage key lymphatic anatomy in your gut, so that all of the "junk" from your feet, legs, and abdomen get pumped up your spine to the left superior vena cava to circulate back through the heart. Cool STUFF! Watch this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kqnua4rHVVA>



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3. Water: Hydrate well with water DAILY – unless otherwise instructed by your physician. Did you know that your body should be made up of 60-70% water? Soft tissue loves water, and so does fascia, and so does 70% of your lymphatic collectors that are right underneath your skin and embedded in fascia. So drink up!

So consider drinking 1/2 your body weight in ounces a day . . . not quite there yet . . . that is OK - start adding slowly so your body's tissue has a chance to absorb it. Think of that dry plant on your window - it needs small drinks or it will just run through the bottom :)

4. Moisturize your skin: Keep your skin soft and supple to avoid dryness and cracks. Your lymph collectors live right under the surface.

5. Walking & Movement: Move around whenever you can - get up, walk up stairs, stretch, try short bursts of exercise, chair yoga, walk the dog, knee bends, sun salutations, run the vacuum - whatever works for you!

The lymphatic system depends largely on large muscle activity in the body for its circulation. We are working more from home, sitting at our computers, and we do not want sluggish lymph.

Activate your lymphatic flow and take a socially distanced brisk walk. Get those arms and legs pumping, and look around to get that head and neck engaged as well. Walking is a weight bearing activity that creates gravitational pulls on the lymphatic system each time you take a step and it helps with venous return too!

6. Nature is open! Is there a beach, bike path, park bench, look out point waiting for you? Being in commune with trees and nature can actually can make your body feel better - know the WHY and science behind it. Read this article:

<https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2017/07/17/536676954/forest-bathing-a-re-treat-to-nature-can-boost-immunity-and-mood>

7. Let's dance: Move and groove all of those major muscle groups. So put on your favorite disco dancing ball songs and let some stress loose!

Content provided by Ronda Crary.