

## Advice on self-lymphatic drainage and skin brushing

This can be done daily, or when required. Do it to enjoy it!

The aim is to gently move the skin and lymphatic channels and encourage them to drain lymph fluid towards the heart where it joins the blood circulation. See the diagram on the next page for direction of flow.

Use a relaxed hand to stroke and stretch the skin, or consider using a body brush.

Choose a body brush with soft bristles as hard bristles can damage delicate skin. This is important if you are older, have had skin problems or cellulitis. You will know the brush is too hard if your skin goes red. Some people prefer a long handled brush so they can reach more easily. Check with your chemist or search online for a body brush that you can get for around £5-10.

Some suggested steps are below. You do not need to do them all, but just choose the ones you have time for:

**Step 1: Start with some deep breathing to move the deep lymph upwards to the heart.**  
Sitting, lying or standing (supported if required) slowly breath in gently, feeling the air go deep into your lungs and expand your belly, then breath out. Repeat 3-5 times.

**Step 2: Gently stretch your neck to move the lymph nodes and channels.**

- Chin towards chest then back to centre; look across your right shoulder then back to centre. Repeat for left side
- Chin towards chest then back to centre; move right ear towards shoulder then back. Repeat for left side.

**Step 3: Gently massage the lymph nodes in the groin area and armpit.**

This helps to empty the lymph nodes so they are able to take in more fluid. Used a relaxed hand to do 5 skin circles in each.

**Step 4: Start stroking or brushing.**

Start near the top of your body, gently stroking or brushing the skin upwards towards the heart. Work up the sides of your body. Start at the top of each limb where it joins the body and stroke or brush towards the lymph nodes. Finish each limb at the hand or foot.

**Step 5: Finish with 2 or 3 more deep breaths to keep the lymph moving.**

Directions of lymph flow for self-lymphatic massage and skin brushing

