



Improving Achy Pain

Have you ever had the feeling of being swollen? Have you ever experienced swelling in your legs, arms, or hands? Do you notice swelling above your collar bone? This is a sign of decreased lymphatic circulation in those areas.

What is your lymph system?

The lymph system is a part of your body which helps transport fluid, white blood cells, and normal metabolic wastes. The lymph system starts with tiny lymph vessels which transport wastes and fluids out of the cells. These lymph vessels merge into larger ones which transport the wastes and fluids to the lymph nodes for filtering. If you have ever been sick, then you know how swollen your lymph nodes are in your throat. This is because your immune system is busy destroying the invading bacteria or virus in your lymph nodes. There are lymph nodes all over your body, but there are larger concentrations in your throat, groin, and underarm areas.

Why is it important to have a healthy flowing lymph system?

When you have tightness in certain tissues, the lymph cannot flow properly. This happens after injury, stress, problems with your heart and circulatory system, infection, or weakness in the muscles. Generally, people will feel achyness in the extremities, pain, or see swelling. This means that the lymph system is not able to get the normal metabolic wastes out of that area. This leads to a back up of “chemical garbage” which does not allow as much blood flow into the area. This toxic soup is not good for the cells in that area and they send out chemicals that cause the nerves in the area to send pain signals to your brain.

Luckily, now knowing this, you can do things to decrease your achyness, and have a healthier functioning lymph system.

If you have chronic pain you should seek professional help that will get you results.

Here is what you can do to help the flow of your lymph system:

1. Learn how to breathe correctly: [Click here to learn diaphragmatic breathing.](#)
2. Get enough rest. Make sure to sleep 7-8 hours a night.
3. Decrease stress. Handle family problems in a positive manner. Write down on paper thoughts that are bothering you and keeping you awake. Think and write down solutions you can find to these problems. Stress really works against the lymphatic system.
4. Avoid salty foods and foods with a lot of preservatives. Have you ever had a product high in sodium and felt swollen or tight in your fingers? Check the labels on the foods you eat to watch the amount of sodium intake. Eat more organic foods and milk to avoid preservatives. Cook home more because you never know how much food additives are put in at a restaurant. Sure it tastes good, but there is probably a lot of sodium in it.
5. Learn lymphatic massage:
 - a. Start by resting your arms on pillows so that they are supported.
 - b. Place your fingers flat on your rib cage underneath your arm.
 - c. Gently massage in circles using keeping your fingers relaxed and flat.
 - d. You may find some tender areas so be gentle.
 - e. Don't move your fingers on the skin, keep them in contact with the skin and move the skin on the tissue underneath.
 - f. The tender areas should start to feel better.
 - g. Now move onto massaging underneath your collar bone. Work all along the collar bone on the tissue.
 - h. Now repeat on the other side.Perform this for 10-15 minutes total and perform 2-3 times a day. More is better and you should feel good after doing this. If it hurts you are pressing way to hard!



These simple steps can help you to have a better functioning lymphatic system and help your body to function normally.

Want to know more about AIM Physical Therapy and how we help people have healthy lives?

Call (561) 733 7677