



While our bodies might be intelligent, autonomous machines, even the strongest constitution can get overwhelmed at times and begin to break down.



Ecstatic Lymphatic

by Skye Forrester

Is taking a long, hot bath one of the ways you de-stress? Check out some of our favourite people, planet- and animal-friendly bath goodies. Grab them in store or online, pour yourself a glass of Fairtrade wine, and soak your troubles away with a copy of Wellness magazine.

Your Built-In Detox

Your lymphatic system is essentially your body's natural detox system – it's a network of vessels that get rid of toxins, waste and other unwanted stuff in the body by transporting lymph from tissues and organs into our blood. These vessels are very similar to the veins and capillaries in our circulatory system. They're connected to lymph nodes and these nodes can be found all over the body – there are hundreds of them! Lymph is a fluid-like substance made up of water, protein and infection-fighting white blood cells that flow just below the skin layers. So, the very best way you can keep your body detoxified is to boost your lymph flow.

If we liken our bodies to our homes, consider this analogy: We're all aware of the scary germs that can build up in our bathrooms and kitchens and so we take particular care in keeping those areas of our home squeaky clean. But did you know that your bedroom and lounge can (and should) be considered just as much of a germ haven? Yet we rarely wash our hands after spending time in the bedroom and are seldom, if ever, freaked out by a germy lounge experience. You can think of your lymphatic system as one of these latter rooms; not taking proper care to keep it clean and functioning well can lead to all sorts of negative health implications that, in Western medicine, may not even be associated with your lymph system at all.

Consider a typical stressful week for most of us; tensions are high at work, you've had trouble sleeping adequately and your poor diet is barely able to sustain you throughout the day. Even the master of keeping cool under pressure can't hide from the physical evidence left of a poorly managed lymphatic system. After a week like this, you'll find yourself wearing your stress – from a dull, grey skin tone and dark eye rings to a puffy face that only Renée Zellweger can seem to pull off (before her extensive cosmetic adjustments, that is).

Autonomous Machines

For the most part, our bodies are impressively constructed to maintain themselves with very little conscious input from us; our skin is able to heal itself of bruises and minor abrasions without us paying it a second thought and the cells in our livers and kidneys are forever regenerating for optimal performance. While our bodies might be

intelligent, autonomous machines, even the strongest constitution can get overwhelmed at times and begin to break down.

There are all kinds of things we're guilty of doing every day that can result in your lymph flow slowing down and becoming sluggish. Stress, poor diet and a lack of exercise is a recipe for a sad lymphatic system. When your lymph flow becomes listless it means toxins get to hang around in your body far longer than they're welcome to. Symptoms of an unhealthy lymphatic system can be as mild as dull skin, dark eye circles and water retention or more alarming like fibrosis caused by lymphedema.

Lymphatic Flow

So, now we know what the lymphatic system does and why it's so important; but how do we make sure it's always running optimally?

One tried and tested method of getting that stubborn lymph flowing is something called Manual Lymphatic Drainage, or MLD. This technique speeds up the elimination of metabolic waste and excess fluid from the body, and also boosts the immune system. MLD is a rhythmic, pumping massage concentrating on key lymph nodes, stimulating the flow of lymph fluid around the body. Because the lymphatic vessels are just below the skin, the massage technique is really gentle and light; in fact, it's not uncommon to fall asleep during the session! Some therapists might employ the Dr. Hauschka method which uses soft mink brushes to make light touches on the skin in a particular sequence.

It's not only great for that internal rejuvenation but the MLD technique is fast becoming a standard beauty treatment, too. Improved circulation as a result of the treatment brings on glowing, healthier looking skin and can even reduce cellulite. Who wouldn't want that?

No matter your treatment of choice, it's of utmost importance that you maintain your lymphatic system the same way you maintain the rest of your body – with a good diet, regular exercise and plenty of water.



5 Foods to improve your lymphatic flow

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1. **Citrus:** jam-packed with vitamin C to support the body and keep digestion flowing.
2. **Berries:** especially cranberries, are rich in detoxifying benefits to cleanse the system aid with hydration.
3. **Greens:** most greens will have vitamins A, C, & K, with iron, magnesium, B vitamins, and protein – essential ingredients for a successful body detox.
4. **Sunflower & Pumpkin seeds:** the magnesium in them supports the nervous system and the healthy fats help lubricate the body and promote lymph flow.
5. **Herbs & Spices:** especially turmeric, ginger, cinnamon, cardamom, coriander, and black pepper – all help the digestive system and keep that lymph flowing.

did you know?

*The word 'lymph' comes from the Latin word *lympha*, which means 'connected to water'.*



WE TRIED IT

KINESIOLOGY

We sent our journalist Skye Forrester to try out a session of kinesiology with Tal Petre.

YES! THE START OF A NEW SEASON AND TIME TO BALANCE OUT THE BODY...

I was excited to experience the mental, emotional, physical and energetic rejuvenation that kinesiology offers - but I had no idea just how enlightening one session could be. I was in for a real treat.

I arrived at the gates of Somersault Studios in Claremont on a beautiful spring morning, Jasmine and cut grass lingering in the air. An exquisite pebble paved drive-way lead to the entrance of the large practice rooms with wooden floors. Tal greeted me at the door to her room with a brilliant, calming smile.

Tal explained she practices two types of kinesiology; specialised kinesiology or Neuro Training and Neural Organisation Technique, or NOT. There are only a small number of kinesiology practitioners qualified to offer this second technique and I was in the capable hands of one of them.

To start off, Tal and I sat together and chatted a little about me. This is so that Tal has some context and a greater understanding of what imbalances might be causing you stress. It's a little like therapy; pouring your heart to a complete stranger is never an easy thing to do. Tal has an excellent bedside manner and an uncanny way of making you feel safe.

After about 15 minutes of chatter, I was ready for my body to start doing the talking. I removed my shoes, at Tal's request, and climbed on to the uber comfy therapy bed. I began lying on tummy as Tal used Muscle Monitoring to gently reveal the secrets my body was holding.

In a two hour session we sorted a sundry of body imbalances from my stressed adrenals to the negative energy being directed my way. I walked out of the session feeling light as a feather, and that night I had the most restful sleep. For a full week you couldn't wipe the silly smile from my face; the session significantly improved my mood and all felt right with the world. I will absolutely go for more!

You can find out more about Tal and her healing hands on her website, www.kinesiologycapetown.co.za, or give her a call on 072 431 7234 to book your own rejuvenation session.



