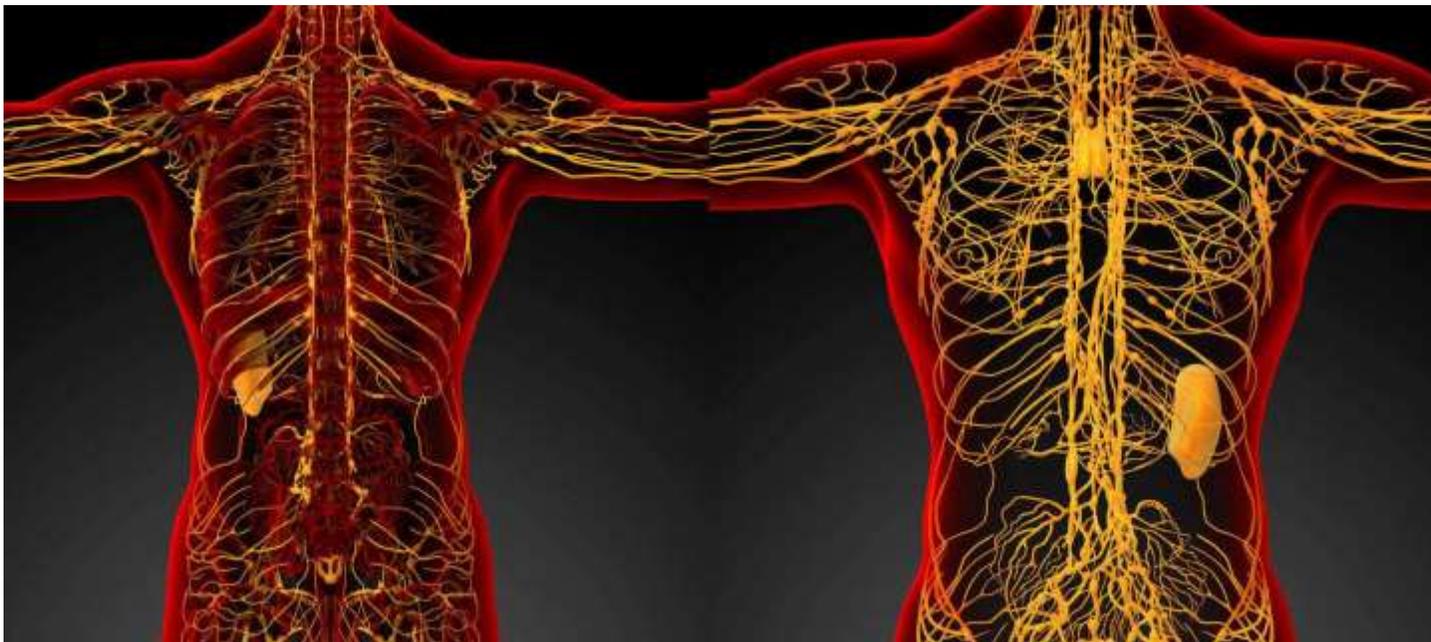


Exercises to Help Drain Your Lymphatic System



The lymphatic system is basically our body's sewer system. Although it has millions of vessels just like the blood system, it has no strong heart to keep lymph moving. Instead, lymph is moved by breathing, walking, intestinal activity, and muscle action. As muscles tighten, lymph vessels are pumped and lymph is pushed along and filtered through lymph nodes on its way back to the veins and the heart.

How to Clean the Lymphatic System

Massage and exercise are especially important. Gentle forms of massages can help move lymphatic fluid, which resides primarily just beneath the skin's surface. And the rhythmic action of muscles contracting and relaxing works as a pump for lymph fluids. Rebounding (using small, inexpensive personal trampolines) and inversion tables are newer apparatuses that increase lymphatic fluid flow and drainage.

Lymph drainage can also be facilitated by manipulating the body in the following ways:

- **Reflex point stimulation:** There is a reflex point that helps stimulate lymphatic drainage in the upper body. It is located at the bottom of the breast bone, or sternum. Vigorously rubbing this area for about two minutes can help the lymphatic drainage.
- **Lymph "milking":** This works well for sore throats, sinus congestion, headaches, and neck tension. Using a lubricant, start under the jaw and milk down the throat on each side of the big muscle on both sides of the neck. Then start at the base of the skull with your thumbs just behind the ears. Push under the skull, into the neck, with firm pressure slowly going toward the collar bone. Continue to do this, and each time move the thumbs closer together toward the spinal column. Always "milk" or massage toward the heart.
- **Axillary traction** (or "armpit pull"): Lie on your back and have someone stand at your head. Place their hands under your armpits, and gently pull straight toward their body. Keep your arms at your sides. Your partner should maintain this traction, or pull, for 20 to 30 seconds. After a short rest, repeat the procedure four to five times.

You can do any of these procedures daily. Before using inversion, however, consult with your doctor—especially if you are pregnant or have high blood pressure, hemorrhages, tubercular conditions, cancer in the pelvic cavity, appendicitis, or ulcers of the stomach or intestine.