

The Lymphatic system as it relates to Massage Therapy & Medi-Cupping VacuTherapies™

Please note that this article is not intended to discuss or explain the lymphatic system in detail but only to discuss how it can be affected by massage therapy and medi-cupping VacuTherapies™ massage. I would encourage you to study up on the lymphatic system as it is a fascinating subject and a major part of your own body! Once you have read this information I think you will be as excited as I am that two of the therapists at The Balanced Body Shoppe are now certified in this technique. Please let us know if you wish to add this new therapy to your massage or to use it as a treatment by itself.

The lymphatic system is, among other things, part of the immune system. It is made up of lymph vessels, nodes and organs such as bone marrow, spleen and thymus. The fine vessels carry a clear fluid called lymph. Lymphatic tissue and vessels are found in all parts of the body (except for the nervous system) with the majority of lymphatic tissue being present in bone marrow, spleen, thymus gland, lymph nodes as well as the tonsils and the digestive tract. It is important to note that while the circulatory system has a pump (the heart), the lymphatic system does NOT have a pump but is dependent on the action of the muscles

As a part of the body's defense system, the lymph nodes filter substances and clean the lymph fluid so that it can be returned to the bloodstream. If this system is not functioning properly it gets sluggish or blocked and the wastes in the system start to become toxic since they cannot be removed efficiently and may cause the body to stop functioning optimally.

Stimulating the lymphatic system through massage or medi-cupping VacuTherapies™ will activate all of the above functions. It will also encourage fluid circulation and cell regeneration. Both massage therapy and medi-cupping promote detoxification, facilitate healing and support the immune system.

•• **VacuTherapies™** are quickly becoming known for beneficial effects on conditions such as:

Fibromyalgia and other auto-immune issues, Neuralgia, Sprains, strains and tears , Diabetes , Vascular issues – spider veins and varicosities , Lymphedema – general and post surgery (i.e. breast cancer and lymph node removal)

Scarring – old and new, post surgery, stretch marks, Plantar Fasciitis, compartmental syndrome, Deep tissue and structural issues–old injuries and chronic movement patterns , Parkinson's disease and many more

This therapy utilizes a machine with glass or plastic cups to create suction on the body surface. These cups are moved over the skin using gliding, shaking, popping and rotating techniques while gently pulling up on the cup, or are parked for a short time to facilitate joint mobilization or soft tissue release. This suction reaches deep into the soft tissue, and also has a sedating effect on the nervous system. Another benefit is to pull inflammation and toxins from the body tissues so that the skin and lymphatic system can readily eliminate them. Scar tissue often releases quickly, despite the age of the injury or keloid tendencies. One of the most amazing aspects of this technique is the "separation" that the vacuum produces in tissue layers. This enables water absorption and renewed blood flow to undernourished and dehydrated tissue, which is invaluable in pre- and post-surgery treatments. It is evident that separation of fused, congested soft tissue and increase in tissue function can be a catalyst for change in many current health conditions as well as for a reduction of cellulite.

•• Please note that these statements are copied, with permission, from ACE Massage & MediCupping VacuTherapies™ (Anita Shannon) in Asheville, NC.

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