

What is Reflexology Lymphatic Drainage? (RLD)

RLD is an award-winning specific technique which stimulates the lymphatic reflexes on the feet. This has an effect on the lymphatic system in the body.

Abstract research in 2012, 2016 & 2018 has shown positive trends in benefitting cancer patients who experience secondary lymphoedema as a result of medical intervention.

RLD was originally developed for the treatment of secondary lymphoedema of the arm however, it is also a highly effective treatment for lymphoedema elsewhere in the body.

After breast cancer some patients may experience psychological and/or emotional difficulties due to an altered body image and having a swollen limb can exacerbate this.

Through my own experience patients have experienced less discomfort and swelling, and an increase in strength and arm mobility after treatment. Indications are that RLD may be a useful intervention for breast-cancer related lymphoedema.

Patients suffering from auto-immune diseases have also benefited greatly from a reduction in pain after receiving 8 consecutive treatments.

The benefits of RLD may last for months but this varies from patient to patient.

Patients are encouraged to continue wearing their sleeve or pressure socks and continuing with self-management as recommended by the lymphoedema clinic is important, and it may also prolong the benefits of the treatment.

What is Secondary Lymphoedema?

Secondary lymphoedema develops following damage to the lymphatic system. According to Cancer Research UK (2011) approximately 20% of cancer patients will develop secondary lymphoedema (swelling of the arm) following breast cancer treatment which include; mastectomy, chemotherapy, radiotherapy, removal of lymph nodes (glands).

What is an RLD treatment like?

Before each treatment commences the swollen limb and the normal limb are temporarily marked to ensure an accurate measurement is taken before and after the treatment.

Taking measurements is an important part of each treatment as it enables us to calculate the amount of fluid which has drained from cell tissue into the lymphatic system for elimination by the body.

Some patients prefer not to have their limbs measured and this is fine as it does not affect the treatment itself.

RLD is given to the feet, the aim of which is to stimulate the function of the lymphatic system and drain excess lymph from the damaged area.