

LYMPHATIC MASSAGE OF THE HEAD AND NECK

The lymphatic system, which is part of our immune system, is a network of vessels and organs working together throughout the body to remove waste from our tissues. It extends downward from the face and neck branching into the body's tissues, and serves as a link to the circulatory system.

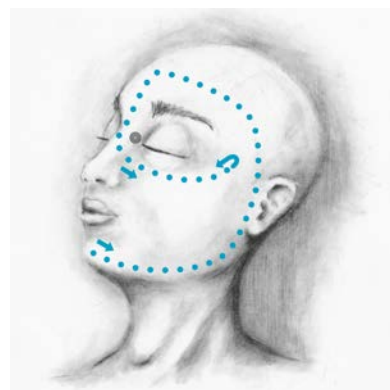
Cellular waste is typically a collection of dead cells, various microorganisms, and infection. Most cellular waste is picked up by the blood and returned to the circulatory system to be cleansed primarily by our kidneys and liver. However, some seeps into our body's tissues and it is the lymphatic system that clears this waste.

The lymphatic system transports waste in lymphatic fluid - or, lymph - moving it through channels to our lymph nodes. The lymph nodes, which can be found all over the body, work like a biological filtering system, trapping, destroying, and then eliminating invading microorganisms.

Just as the body needs to remove waste, the brain also needs to keep itself cleaned out. Proper brain function requires constant removal of metabolic waste (those substances left over from normal cellular processes) to keep communication between our neurons strong. The brain has its own cleaning system, similar to the lymphatic system of the body, comprised of channels surrounding the blood vessels in the brain. As the brain's cleaning system removes surplus substances that accumulate in the brain tissues, the waste is transported to the neck where it is picked up by the lymphatic system for removal.

We can assist the brain in cleaning itself by keeping the lymphatic system of our head and neck functioning well. The Lymphatic Massage of Head and Neck supports the cleaning system of the brain in this manner.

Lymphatic Massage of the Head and Neck



START HERE

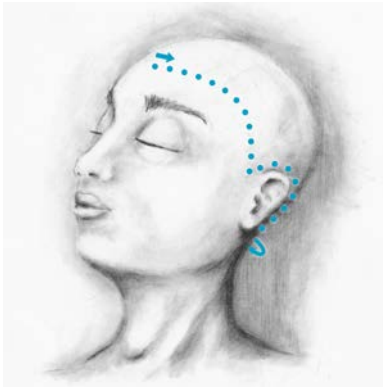
With both hands, tap your chin with your fingertips - move up in front of each ear, up to the middle of your forehead, down the bridge of your nose, under your eyes out to each temple and then return to your nose, ending this sequence at your nose.

Squeeze the bridge of your nose between your thumb and first finger.

Do once. Take your time.

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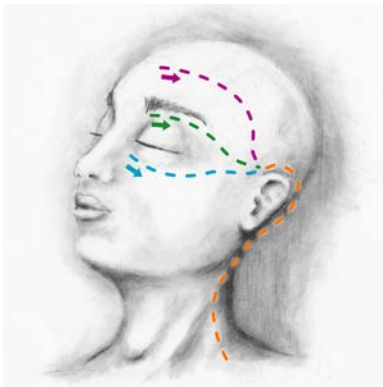
NOW

Place your fingers in the center of your forehead and tap out to the sides, down to each ear, up and around the ears, down behind your ears to the base of your skull. Massage along the base of the skull to the center.

Do once. Take your time.

NEXT

- Place your fingers on the top of your head and massage vigorously side to side from your forehead over the top and down to the base of your skull. Repeat 2 to 3 times.
- Tap with your fingertips all over your head.
- Run your fingertips over your scalp from your forehead over the top of your head and down to the base of your skull. Repeat 3 to 5 times
- Massage your ears starting at the top, going around the edges and down to the earlobes. Repeat 3 times.



CONTINUE

Place the pads of your fingers under each eye and stroke out to the ears, above the ears, down behind the ears, and down the sides of neck. Repeat 3 to 5 times.

Repeat this motion beginning with the pads of your fingers under each eyebrow. Repeat 3 to 5 times.

Repeat this motion beginning with the pads of your fingers in the center of your forehead. Repeat 3 to 5 times.



NEXT

Position your ears between your ring and middle fingers. Stroke downward. Repeat 15 to 20 times.

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NOW

- With your fingertips, massage along your jaw line and above your lip. Take your time.
- Make a gentle fist and use your knuckles to gently stroke downward under your jawbone starting from the center and moving out toward your ears. Repeat 3 to 5 times. Then continue stroking down your neck to your collarbone.
- Cup your neck with your hands – your fingers tips are at the back of your neck. Draw your fingers to the front and downward to the collarbone. Repeat 20 to 25 times.
- Place your fingers on top of your collarbone – position your hands by placing the ring finger of each hand in the indentation between the two collarbones; the remaining fingers are spread along the collarbone. Gently stroke downward, starting only about an inch above the collarbone and ending on the collarbone. Repeat 10 to 15 times.

COMPLETE YOUR LYMPHATIC MASSAGE

- Massage under your collarbone from the center out to the edge of one shoulder.
- Massage your armpit and the crease by the armpit.
- Vigorously rub down the arm to your wrist and then massage each finger.
- Squeeze the webbed area that is between your thumb and index finger.
- Lightly squeeze your hand from your wrist down to the fingers, then shake your hand as if shaking off water.
- Repeat on the other side.

**Be sure to drink extra water
to assist the lymph as it moves along the lymphatic channels.**

Illustrations by Carla Olson, Cimarron Creative

