

Manual Lymphatic Drainage (MLD)

Contra Indications – Absolute:

Thrombosis (acute) in the oedematous area: Manual therapy can dislodge a thrombus (lung embolism). MLD is discontinued in the area of the thrombosis until it has grown onto the vessel wall (checked using ultra sound). Compression bandaging is indicated for thrombosis.

Infection in the oedematous area – flushing out of pathogens by stimulation of lymph-angiomotoricity. After antibiotic therapy of 7-10 days, MLD can be resumed if a positive response is achieved (normalization of the inflammation values, reduced signs of inflammation).

Congestive heart failure – MLD mobilizes significant quantities of fluid when there is extensive oedema. For patients with cardiac insufficiency, the increased return of fluid to the heart can lead to an acute overload of the heart and to the development of pulmonary oedema. Therefore, medical treatment of the congestive heart failure is the normal procedure. If successful, MLD can begin and use of compression therapy with light pressure which can be tolerated by the heart.

N.B. Cancer – untreated cancer is no longer considered an absolute contraindication. The opinion that MLD dis-tributes tumour cells via the lymph vessels in the body, leading to the formation of daughter neoplasms (metastases) is generally no longer held. (Reference: Vodder Lecture Notes Therapy Course: Dr George Kettenhuber, Dr A . Shetty-Lee and Dr Ch. Heim). Susanna would always contact your GP for permission in the cases of active or palative cancer.

Contra Indications – Relative:

Hypertension or Nodular, abnormal thyroid – MLD in the vicinity of the thyroid can lead to the discharge of thyroid hormone. So the first part of MLD to the neck (excludes anterior regions of the profundus, middle and terminus).

Hypotension – MLD can cause a further decrease in blood pressure. So a shorter MLD time is taken and slow standing after treatment. The use of a foot bath can be beneficial for the stimulation of the soles of the feet.

Bronchial Asthma – MLD can lead to an increase in the vagal nerve tone and sympatholytic effect. Such an activation of the vagus nerve facilitates narrowing of the bronchi; therefore MLD can trigger an attack in asthma sufferers. Therefore MLD should always be started in the interval between attacks. Please bring your medication with you.