



General wound healing

by Dee Jones

In the June/July Issue of *Massage World* we looked in detail at the effect of Manual Lymph Drainage on lymphoedema in general and one case in particular. Frankly, treating such cases is not for everyone and this is where training in The Original Dr. Vodder's Manual Lymph Drainage (MLD) puts you – the therapist – in a much stronger position in many ways.

Wound healing with MLD is so amazing and fantastic that it's hard to believe that such a light and gentle touch can be so very, very effective. This is a technique which needs no products at all. No oils, no powders and no medicine. The rate of healing – be it tissue or bone – is remarkable and the pain relief that is experienced was the basis of the TENS machines, that came after, which are used extensively in the NHS and Physiotherapy clinics world-wide.

A Few Examples

A tall woman (6 foot) of 82 fell on an uneven pavement and came down hard. She fractured her humerus when she put that arm out to break her fall.

An ambulance was called and she was taken to hospital where they X-rayed the arm and sent her home the following day with pain killers, a sling and another appointment to see them in 10 days.

Fortunately she knew of the powerful effects of MLD and called her MLD Therapist as soon as she was home. The Therapist went to work on her that same day, treating her for the bruising as well as the broken arm. One hour, every day for the next 7 days, skipped a day and then treated her on the 9th day before she went back for her check-up at the hospital.

The hospital did another set of X-rays and came back to the patient in astonishment asking, "When was the accident?". The bone had healed so well, particularly considering her age, that they thought their records were wrong and that she had had the accident more than a month ago. Also, there was no bruising visible – none.

So what magic did her therapist do? Nothing more than Therapy 1 level Manual Lymph Drainage techniques. A technique which disperses the excess blood which causes bruising, gets rid of the excess inflammatory fluids and chemicals which cause the tissues to swell and allows the

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body's own repair systems, an optimal environment to do their job even more effectively.

How does that happen?

The gentleness and sensitivity of the experienced MLD therapist allows you to work very close to and sometimes on top of tissue damage and bruising without causing your client any discomfort.

The session would start at the neck – even if the damage is on a foot! – and then move slowly towards the offended part of the body. Work is done on the contra-lateral side first and then moves closer and closer to the damaged area/s.

As Dr. Vodder's Manual Lymph Drainage is performed, the musculature of the lymph vessels is continually triggered until the vessels are pulsing at approximately 100 times the usual rate. This in turn clears the interstitium of excess fluid and waste products. For example, with a broken bone you get bleeding from the break itself with blood pooling at the lowest point beneath the break. MLD can get rid of that blood.

When the interstitial fluid is cleared of localised blockages and excess waste products then the body's own repair cells can get to the scene much more quickly.

Pain Relief

The pain relieving effects of Manual Lymph Drainage have to be felt to be believed. This 82 year old didn't bother with the pain pills after her MLD sessions.

How does that happen?

To understand how MLD works as an analgesic one must first understand the 'Gate Theory'.

There are many receptors in the skin which convey different messages to the brain and it is up to the brain to decipher these messages into pain, comfort, touch, heat, cold etc. In this case we are interested in just two of them.

- + **The Nociceptors (Red in the illustration)** and the
- + **Mechanoreceptors (Green in the illustration)**

When you are wounded, the nociceptors send a series of action potentials to the nearest nerve synapse which relays those action potentials to the brain and you 'feel' pain. The more action potentials that are sent, the more painful it is.

Diagram 1



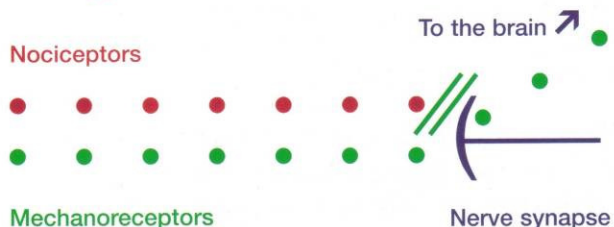
▲ The mechanoreceptors only react to the sense of touch. If you touch the area, (or as near as you can without causing further distress), with a changing pressure you activate the mechanoreceptors who send out their own action potentials and take over the nerve synapse – effectively blocking the pain.

Diagram 2



▲ How effective you can be – and for how long – is based on the amount of pain action potentials (or severity of the pain), compared with the amount of mechanoreceptor action potentials (touch changes) you can trigger with the use of MLD.

Diagram 3



▲ In some cases you can eradicate the pain completely. In others you can relieve the pain for a period of time, then do MLD again and the pain free period lengthens.

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First aid in your hands: all day, every day

These two effects work extremely well on all of the first aid situations you are likely to come across. Someone burns themselves cooking? Of course, run cold water over it but then! Sit and do 20 to 30 minutes of MLD – blisters disappear and no pain is felt. (This is true of even 2nd degree burns). Someone catches their thumb/finger/hand in a folding chair or bed? MLD for 20 to 30 minutes.

You are trying your hand at skateboarding when you come off in spectacular fashion – now you have a gravel burn 6 inches square on your thigh or arm (or both!!). 20 to 30 minutes of MLD, again 2 hours later and again 6 hours later. The next day, do as many as required, (probably 2 to 3), and the third day the same. No bruising, minimal scars and no pain. This worked extremely well on one client who had numerous gravel burns including one over the ankle that went nearly to the bone.

If you are a sports therapist the possibilities are endless as there are very few contraindications and you can get to work almost as soon as the damage occurs. Sprains, strains, bruising, broken bones and skin and torn muscles all come to mind.

The ultimate in wound healing

We have all heard about or known people who have suffered from venous ulcers. Usually older people (though not always) they end up being bandaged and attending a weekly ulcer or wound healing clinic for the next six months or more. Meanwhile they are walking around with a seeping wound on their ankle and bandaged to the knee. Lovely. Not to mention the cost to the NHS.

In picture A is a gentleman who explained on the telephone when he was booking in for lymphoedema treatment that – along with his lymphoedema – he had a “small hole”. Nearly three inches across, shallow and with clean edges, this ulcer had been in place for two months.

In picture B is his ulcer after 15 daily treatments. What was his treatment? Daily Manual Lymph Drainage, fresh wound dressings and compression bandaging. Simple eh? Cost effective too.

Effects of Manual Lymph Drainage

MLD also has an effect on the sympathetic nervous system. Calming it and giving the para-sympathetic system room to take over. So you have a wound and are in pain. Get rid of the pain, start healing the wound and relax your client totally. The relaxed person can cope with more pain than a stressed person. (Try going to the dentist when you are really stressed out!) Decreased pain relaxes people.

A wound which doesn't hurt and is visibly healing, along with feeling more relaxed about it all makes a much more positive patient – and things get better very, very fast.

Interested?

For training in MLD and CDT please
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