

Lymphedema is a build-up of lymph fluid that causes swelling. This factsheet can help you prevent lymphedema after surgery and radiation therapy.

What is lymphatic self-massage?

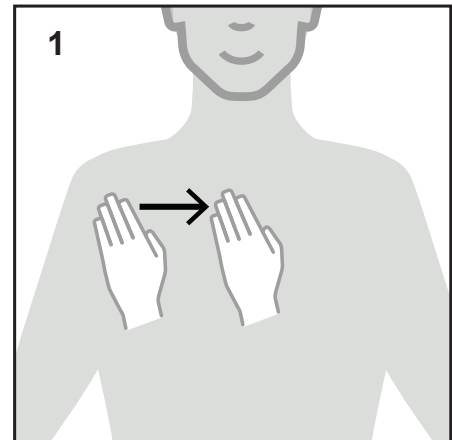
It is a very light and gentle type of massage. It helps move the lymph fluid and stop swelling or keep it from happening.

How do I do it?

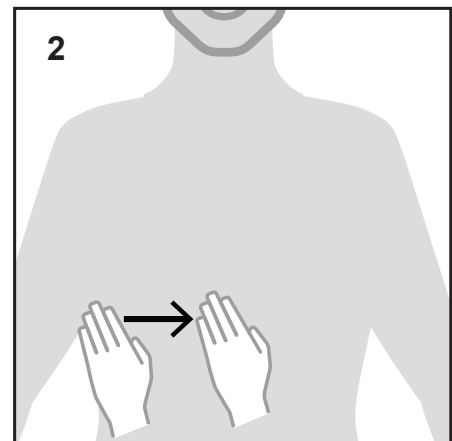
Follow the steps here to massage the side of your body that has the swelling. Each stroke should not be too light and should not be too hard. You only need to apply enough pressure to stretch the skin.

1. Upper chest. Place the hand opposite the swelling flat on your chest, just below your shoulder. Gently stretch the skin toward the middle of your chest. Each stroke should last about two seconds. Do this five times.
2. Lower chest. Place the hand opposite the swelling flat just below your breast and below the armpit. Gently stretch the skin towards the middle of your chest. Each stroke should last about two seconds. Do this five times.
3. Side abdomen. Place the hand opposite the swelling flat on the front side of your chest. Your fingers should barely touch your arm when it's down by your side. Your hand should not be under your arm. Gently stretch the skin down and stop right above your hip. Each stroke should last about two seconds. Do this five times.

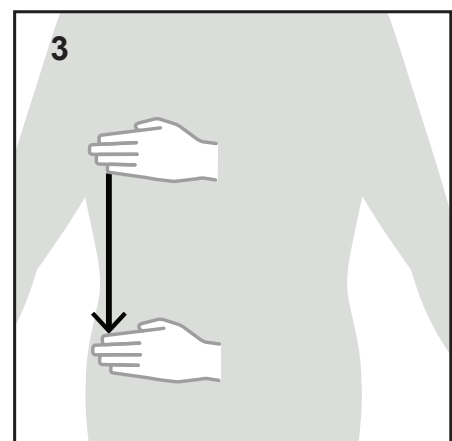
Do the massage two times every day—once in the morning and once in the evening.



Massaging the upper chest



Massaging the lower chest



Massaging the side abdomen