

What is new at Touching Well?

Over the last few months I did quite a bit of further training, mainly in lymphoedema and MLD. I have been enthused by a new compression system called Coban. This is lighter and much easier to tolerate than traditional lymphoedema bandages, people can even type with their fingers bandaged. I have been on a training course to learn how to apply this product. The Coban compression is available on prescription. I have also been on my MLD update. What I particularly enjoyed were discussions with my fellow participants: nurses working within the NHS. They had a wealth of knowledge, one of them had worked for a long time with the top lymphoedema specialist, Professor Mortimer at St George's Hospital in London.

Face Vitality

I have been planning a new, special facial treatment for a while. Now, in the colder season the time is right: *Face Vitality*. The session will start with a deep cleanse of the face, followed by soothing and ever so relaxing Deep Oscillation massage. To finish, your face will receive toner and luxurious Rose moisturiser. You will leave re-vitalised

and your face will feel alive! This treatment will be on special offer for £25 (instead of £28) while the temperature is below 10°C (outside obviously).

Gift vouchers

In case you are short of a special treat, either for yourself or a loved one: We offer Gift Vouchers. All treatments are available as a voucher. The system is easy, just an email or phone call is required. You can have the voucher sent (by snail or e-mail) to you directly or to the receiver. Payment by balance transfer or cheque (or cash if in person).

Wishing you a spring in your step,

Regina Dengler



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On-site massage for aches & pains

There have not been any studies on on-site massage for a while, now there are three new studies showing positive results. One focusses on female office workers in Slovenia. Researchers looked at range of movement and discomfort in the neck, upper and lower back. The women received chair massages twice a week for one month. Women reported fewer aches and pains after the eight or nine massages, compared to women who had not received the on-site massage or had only one session. Furthermore, the range of movement increased in their neck after the series of massages. (*J Altern Complement Med.* 2011 Jul;17(7):617-22). I can certainly concentrate better if I am not in pain. Can you? Why not try our special offer: one hour FREE on-site massage at your company.

Recent feedback

I just wanted to let you know how pleased I am with the treatments I have been having from you. I have suffered terribly with back pain and headaches over the years. Since I have been coming to you I have noticed a considerable improvement in both. As a result I can do many more things pain-free, which has a massive positive impact on my general feeling of well-being. I can't thank you enough.

Victoria, Nottinghamshire

Thank you for reminding my body how it should feel.

Jackie, Sneinton, Nottingham

I came to Regina with swelling in the head and neck area. Over the last few months she has reduced the swelling with her MLD therapy so that it is almost gone. The massages are always excellent and I look forward to them.

Asha, Derby

... and helps with pain from work

A study in Brazil explored how massage could help nurses who had lower back pain from their work. They looked at lower back pain, and its influence on the performance of work and life activities for the nursing team. Eighteen nurses received seven to eight massages after work at their work place. The back pain of the staff decreased significantly. The nurses also reported that they were less disabled by their lower back issue (which they got from work in the first place!) after the series of massages. "It is concluded that massage was effective in reducing occupational lower back pain, and provided improvement in activities of work and life." (*Rev Lat Am Enfermagem.* 2012 Jun;20(3):511-9.). Both studies show that a series of massages is more effective than one-off sessions. Though those are wonderful, too, particularly if it's your first one.

... and stress in nurses

Another study looked at whether stress in nurses at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester (Minnesota, USA) could be helped through weekly chair massages. 38 nurses received a 15-minute on-site massage during their work time. They took four different measurements of stress and anxiety at the beginning, middle and end of the study. For you and me that means four differently themed questionnaires. Just over 80% of the available massage appointments were used by the nurses. All four measurements were a lot better (highly significant!) after 10 weeks of weekly massage. The authors concluded that massages for nurses during work hours reduced stress-related symptoms. (*Complement Ther Clin Pract.* 2012 Nov;18(4):212-5.). These are relatively short sessions, 15 minutes each. These are common in on-site massage. This study shows these sessions are highly effective in dealing with stress. Wonderful, the difference 15 minutes can make!





On this page I focus on how bodywork affects older adults. Even a very short treatment, such as gentle 3 minute stroking, can make a difference.

Slow stroking soporific

A study wanted to find out whether a 3 minute slow stroke back massage for dementia residents in a nursing home would improve their sleep. Well, residents in the massage group slept 36 minutes longer a night than a non-massaged control group, however, this did not reach statistical significance. (J Holist Nurs. 2012 Sep 24).

Aromatherapy for stress reduction

This study offered nursing home residents Aromatherapy massage twice a week for 4 weeks to evaluate whether this would bring down their stress levels. It was found that the residents were less stressed after each massage compared to before the massage. Over the long term stress measurements decreased. (J Altern Complement Med. 2012 Oct 12). Massage is one way to address stress and anxiety in residential care. This brings me to an exciting development within Nottingham Mental Health: Recently over 20 mental health hospital staff were trained in Indian Head Massage and are offering it now to patients on the wards. Furthermore, bodywork and massage is available on the NHS (by an experienced massage and shiatsu practitioner) in the community to help people with mental health issues to get better.

Massage prevents falls

Falls in older adults are an important cause of decreased mobility and independence, more illness, and accidental death. Research and clinical reports suggest that massage may positively influence the causes of falls, such as balance or neurological function.

Thirty five older adults either received 6 full body massages or were resting in the treatment room. It was found that even a single, 60-minute, full-body massage has a stabilizing effect on measures of static and dynamic balance and physiological factors related to stability in older adults. (Int J Ther Massage Bodywork. 2012;5(3):16-27). Six weekly massages had an immediate and long term positive effect on balance, the nervous and the cardiovascular system in older adults. They had lower blood

pressure and their posture was more stable, thus they were less likely to have a fall. (Int J Ther Massage Bodywork. 2012;5(3):28-40)

Keith's story

A few years ago I suffered a lower back injury whilst lifting a heavy object, resulting in a fortnight in bed and a course of painkillers and other drugs.

It gradually improved but a persistent ache remained and I occasionally felt painful twinges when bending forwards. I spend much of the day working on a computer, which doesn't help, and last year my shoulders and neck became stiff and painful. I decided I needed help and asked Google to find someone in my area with the right qualifications. That was a mistake! Do not just type "massage Nottingham" in your search box! I refined my search, found Touching Well, phoned and left a message and Regina called me later that day.

My first visit started with a thorough discussion followed by a physical examination, which quickly identified the problem areas. From the start it was obvious from the extent of her note-taking that Regina takes her work seriously. The massage which followed was amazingly effective. As I walked to my car I could feel my lower back and shoulders were much looser and more relaxed and the tension had gone.

I booked a series of visits and each one built on the previous improvements to the point where I felt completely free of pain. Since then I have had no recurrence of lower back pain or discomfort. I still spend too long at my computer keyboard and earlier this year I had a recurrence of the discomfort in my shoulders, so I called Regina again. A four-week course of massages followed and all the discomfort was gone. Since then I have been a regular visitor to Touching Well and I really look forward to my weekly pampering.

Regina's techniques are thorough and effective. Every massage session relieves all the tensions and makes me feel completely relaxed. Any stiffness or aches are removed and a feeling of complete calmness stays with me for the rest of the day. I can unreservedly recommend Regina to anyone who wants relief from aches and pains or stress. I would just warn you to make sure you are completely awake before driving home!



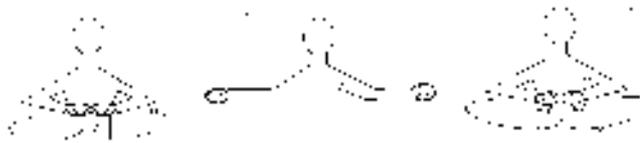
The wave

This exercise, also known as “Combined Breathing and Exercise Programme” has been shown to be helpful in improving and maintaining lymphatic drainage. Repeat twice daily, ie. Morning and night.

The starting position is with fingers pointing at breast bone. Take a full breath in while moving the arms slowly and gently outwards.

When the arms reach full stretch, the breath is held. All the arm muscles are then tightened.

While breathing out relax the arm muscles and bring the arms back into starting position.



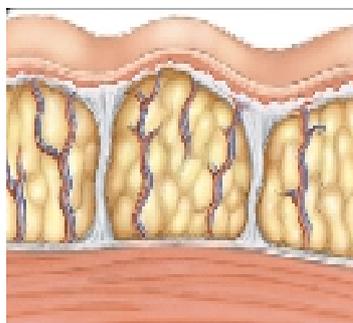
Repeat the exercise up to 10 minutes, slowly and steadily. (Lymphology. 2005

Sep;38(3):136-45)

Cellulite

I get quite a few enquiries about cellulite – does MLD or any kind of massage, help?. If you look at the scientific evidence, the short answer is: no. Nothing cures it! - but some things can help you to look better.

Cellulite (also known orange peel syndrome and cottage cheese skin) is caused by fat deposits that sit side-by-side with tough collagen fibres that are anchored to the muscle beneath. When the fibres pull tight, or the fatty areas grow larger, the fat deposits may bulge out. Cellulite is much more common in women than in men, 80-90% of women have got some. Connective tissue bands under men’s skin are criss-crossed like a



net, keeping their fat more evenly restrained. By contrast, women’s tissue bands are organized in vertical columns, so fat may bulge irregularly.

“At a normal weight your fat cells fall nicely into valleys of connective tissue,” said Dr. Michael D. Jensen, a clinical professor of medicine at the Mayo Clinic, who has studied fat for 25 years. “When you get too many fat cells or too big fat cells they push up on the roof,” that's our skin. ” Women don’t have as thick a skin as men, all the better to show dimples. And thanks to oestrogen, women have more fatty reserves.

And it doesn’t stop there. As we age, the connective tissue strands between our skin and muscle, which used to stretch to accommodate weight fluctuations, become inflexible. “Some of the bands tighten down and you get pockmarks with bulges next to them,” said Dr. Brian M. Kinney, an plastic surgeon at the University of Southern California.

Several factors have been shown to affect the development of cellulite, for example race, distribution of subcutaneous fat, and predisposition to lymphatic and circulatory insufficiency. A high-stress lifestyle will cause an increase in the level of catecholamines, which have also been associated with the evolution of cellulite. Certain dieting practices can also diminish the level of these chemicals. Unfortunately, though, losing weight typically results in the appearance of cellulite.

What can you do? You can't make it go away but lifestyle choices can affect its appearance. Avoid yo-yo dieting, an excessively high-carbohydrate diet, smoking, an increase in total body fat, fluid retention and being dehydrated. Be active, this stimulates the lymphatic system. Massage and MLD do the same. So bodywork will not cure it, but it will tone the muscles, stimulate the lymphatic system and help you to feel good – and thus look good!