Welcome to the Wittlinger Lymphedema Clinic

Center for excellence in lymphedema treatment
Lymphedema rehabilitation center – Treatment
Academy – Training – Research

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3rd British Columbia Lymphedema Awareness Day
Vancouver, April 21, 2012

MANUAL LYMPHDRAINAGE AND ITS EFFECTS

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Lymphatic system

- Lymphatic system
  - Additional vascular network
  - Connecting the tissue with the venous system

- Lymph vessel system
  - Fine initial lymph vessels start blind in the tissue
  - Flow into larger transport vessels
  - Finally into the right and left venous arch
Lymph node

- **Lymph node system**
  - About 600 lymph nodes
  - Size between 2-30 mm
  - Function
    - Filter station
    - Lymphocytes producer
    - Regulates protein and water content of the lymph
Lymph

- Liquid between the connective tissue
- Content:
  - Proteins
  - Cells
  - Foreign bodies
Edema: characteristic

- Imbalance between supply and drainage of fluid which results in an abnormal accumulation of water in the tissue

- Various kind of edema
  - Lymphedema
    - Primary lymphedema
    - Secondary lymphedema
  - Lipedema
  - Phlebedema
  - Others
Lymphedema: incidence & characteristics

- Approximately 140 million to 250 million cases of lymphedema worldwide
- Symptoms of lymphedema
  - Sensation of heaviness / tension
  - Restricted motion
  - Pitting: degree dependent on stage of edema development
Lymphedema: classification

❖ **Primary**
  ❖ Developmental disturbance of the lymphatic vessels and/or lymph nodes
  ❖ May develop anytime during life

❖ **Secondary**
  ❖ Result of a mechanical insufficiency of the lymphatic drainage system
  ❖ Stenosis or obliteration
  ❖ Internal or external impairment
Lymphedema: stages

Stage I

Stage II

Stage III

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Lymphedema: stages

Stage I

Stage II

Stage III
Lymphedema: examination methods

Case history

❖ History of edema
❖ Clinical examination
❖ High-tech examination
   ❖ Scintigraphy, sonography, MRI, CT
Therapy: Manual Lymph Drainage according to Dr. Vodder

- Anatomy on the lymph vessel system in the 16th century
- Dr. Emil and Estrid Vodder developed MLD in 1930
- Founding of the Dr. Vodderschule by Günther and Hildegard Wittlinger
Combined Decongestive Therapy: Manual Lymph Drainage

- Large-surface massage technique
- 4 stroke techniques
  - Stationary circle
  - Scoop technique
  - Pump technique
  - Rotary technique
Combined Decongestive Therapy: Additional therapeutic treatments

- Kinesio tape
- Electrotherapy
- Pneumatic compression
- Surgery
Combined Decongestive Therapy: Skin care & bandaging

- **Skin Care**
  - **Stressed skin**
  - **Intensive skin care is required**

- **Bandaging**
  - **No edema treatment without bandaging afterwards (exceptions)**
  - **Saggy skin after successful MLD treatment**
  - **Maintain the effect of MLD**
Combined Decongestive Therapy: Custom-fitted compression stocking

- Maintenance phase

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Combined Decongestive Therapy: Lymphedema exercise & nutrition

- Lymphedema gymnastics
  - Water gymnastics
  - Nordic Walking
  - Fitness and much more

- Nutrition
  - No lymphedema diet exists
  - Balanced diet
  - Reduction of salt
  - Lower fat intake
Study construct: Effect of MLD (Compression vs. No Compression) & systemic effect of MLD

- 51 patients with secondary upper or lower lymphedema
- 3 week inpatient stay
- Treatment with MLD
- 42 with compression bandaging
- 9 without compression

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Thanks for your attention

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