

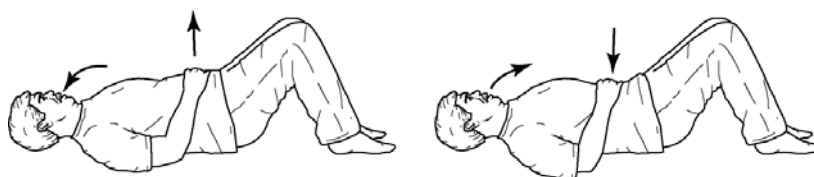
# Lymph Drainage Exercises for Lower Extremity

Decongestive exercises can play an important role with managing your Lymphedema, especially in the initial phase of treatment. The exercises should be done in the following sequence; trunk, neck, shoulder, legs. Do each exercise at least 2-3 times. You may choose to do more, but it is important to follow the sequence. It does not have to be a strong muscle contraction to be effective; the idea is to simply contract the muscle. If you have any difficulty in doing these exercises, your therapist can help direct you in making changes that will allow you to perform these exercises. Your bandages or stockings should be worn during the exercises. Exercises should be done with both the affected and nonaffected limb.

## Trunk

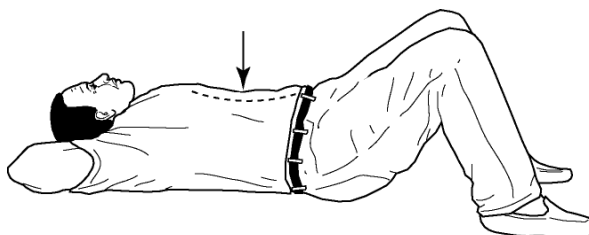
### Abdominal Breathing:

- Lie on your bed or floor you may also sit in a comfortable chair, knees slightly bent feet on the floor, resting your hands on your stomach.
- Take deep breaths to relax, feel your stomach rise as you breathe in.
- Breathe out slowly through your mouth, letting gravity pull your stomach back toward the bed or floor. Repeat.
- Take a short rest before getting up to avoid dizziness.



### Pelvic Tilt:

- Lie on your back with feet slightly apart, knees bent and feet flat. Using your stomach muscles "tilt" your pelvis and flatten your lower back into the floor or bed. Imagine trying to press down and flatten a penny with the small of your back. Hold for a count of 10. Release and repeat.



### Partial Sit-up with Breathing:

- Inhale by breathing into your belly. As you exhale, slightly lift your head and shoulders off the floor, reaching forward with your hands. Be careful not to strain your neck!



### Neck

#### Neck Rotation:

- Turn your head slowly to the right as you inhale and count to five. Return to the center as you exhale. Repeat to the left.



#### Head Tilt:

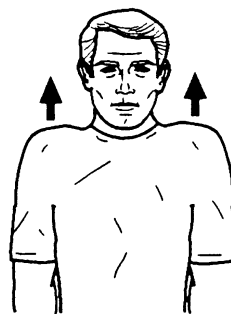
- Gently move your right ear toward your right shoulder, hold for 5 seconds, then slowly bring head back to the center. Repeat on other side.



### Shoulder

#### Shoulder Shrug:

- Lift both shoulders towards your ears as you inhale, exhale and return to relaxed position. Next, pull shoulder down as far as possible and return to relaxed position.



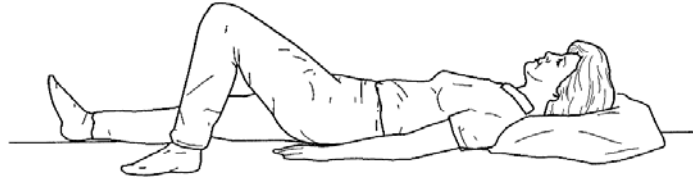
#### Shoulder Rolls:

- Roll shoulders back making a continuous circle.

## Leg

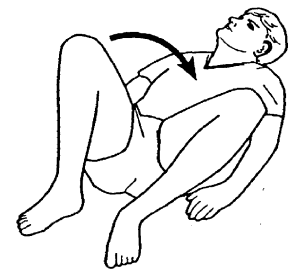
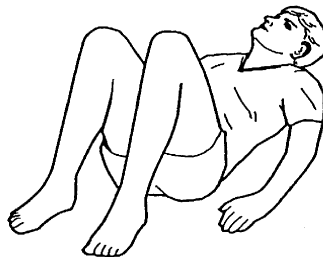
### Flexion:

- Lie with both legs straight. Slide one leg up bending the knee and slide it back down. Repeat with other leg. Use good breathing throughout.



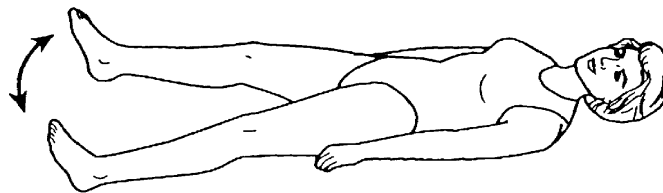
### Leg Falls:

- Bend both knees and keep your feet flat on the floor, bed. Keep one leg in place and slowly lower your other leg out to the side. Bring your leg back to center. Repeat with the other leg.



### Leg slides:

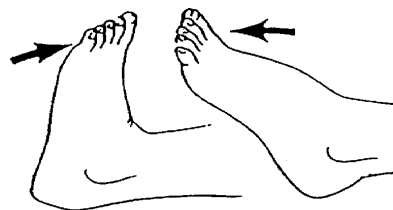
- Lie with both legs straight. Slide your leg out to the side and return it to the center. Keep your knees straight and pointing up during the exercise. Repeat with the other leg.



## Ankle

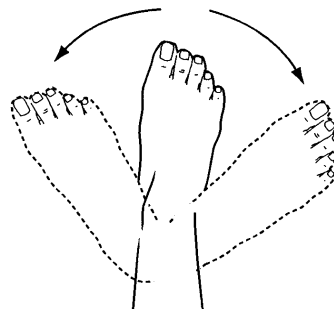
### Ankle pumps:

- Move your foot up and down as if pushing down or letting up on a gas pedal in a car. Repeat 10 times. Repeat with other foot.



### Ankle inversion / eversion:

- Move your foot side to side. Repeat 10 times.



You may end your exercise session with more abdominal breathing. It may also be a good idea to continue lying down and elevate your leg on a pillow while relaxing for a few minutes.

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