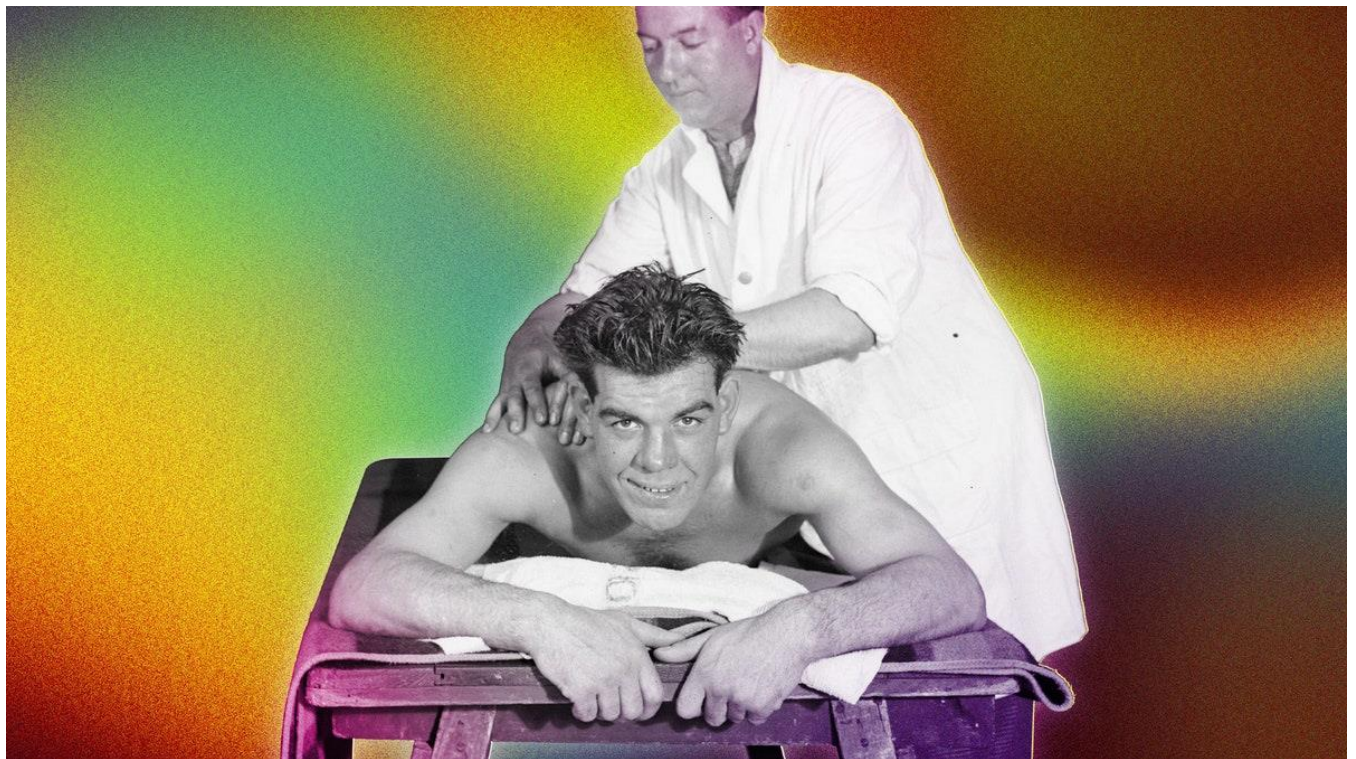


# Everyone's getting a lymphatic drainage massage to detox the body. But does it actually work?

The next big self-care craze – and here's what the experts really think of it

By Adam Cheung

<https://www.gq-magazine.co.uk/article/lymphatic-drainage-massage-benefits>



If you're into health and [self-care](#) at all, chances are you've heard of the term 'lymphatic drainage massage' over the past couple of months. Some of the world's most perfect-looking people like Jennifer Aniston, Kendall Jenner, Kim Kardashian, and of course, the Queen of Wellness herself [Gwyneth Paltrow](#) are all big fans of it. And, with over one billion views over on TikTok (and counting), everyone else seems to be too.

But in a world of social media and the internet and general untruths, a new self-care craze seems to pop up every single week. While lymphatic drainages are proving extremely popular now, that doesn't automatically mean that they work as advertised. So, we caught up with some experts to find out if all the hype is worth it, or if it's just another quack trend.



### **What is a lymphatic drainage massage?**

Lymphatic drainage massage (or manual lymphatic drainage) is essentially a gentle form of [massage](#) that's meant to stimulate the natural drainage of the lymph system, a network of organs that moves

fluid to and from human tissue. Keeping it sieved is said to eliminate toxins and waste from the body. And it's not a novel procedure, either. It was actually first introduced by Dr Emil Vodder all the way back in the early 1930s.

Vodder came up with the idea while working at a hospital in [Paris](#). Here, he was tending to patients who were suffering from congested lymph nodes. He noticed that, when he applied light manual pressure to their nodes, it helped to push the fluid throughout the body resulting in a reduction of swelling.

Fast forward almost one hundred years, and practitioners continue to use the lymphatic drainage massage for the same reasons. It's also used to treat lymphedema, which is basically the swelling of your arms and legs, rheumatoid arthritis, and chronic venous insufficiency. But, over the last few years, some have claimed that it can also break down fat, reduce cellulite, prevent [ageing](#), and glow-up your skin.

### **What are the benefits?**

“The lymphatic drainage massage has quickly become one of the most popular treatments,” says Alexandra Mills, skincare expert and founder of [AM Aesthetics](#). “It can help with a variety of different conditions, such as improving lymph circulation, boosting the immune system, and aiding in relaxation and [stress](#) reduction, which is something that we all need now and again.”

“If you suffer from lymphedema or severe swelling, the lymphatic drainage massage can offer temporary relief,” says aesthetic medical practitioner [Dr Bhavjit Kaur](#). “It can significantly improve pains that you might experience in your wrist and knees, and the technique also effectively reduces soreness in joints and minimizes the swelling in the tissues around them.”

For those who are recovering from [plastic surgery](#) (or any cosmetic surgeries, for that matter), lymphatic drainage is used to speed up the recovery process, which can be quite challenging. “One of the primary benefits of a lymphatic drainage massage is its ability to accelerate

healing and reduce post-surgical swelling,” says Dr Aftab Siddiqui, consultant plastic surgeon at [Breast & Body Clinic](#). “Excessive scar tissue can lead to complications such as restricted movement and aesthetic concerns, but LDM can decrease the formation of scar tissue by facilitating the removal of cellular debris and promoting the regeneration of healthy tissue. This can result in smoother, less visible scars.”