

## A Look at Lymph (Part 2 of 2)

*What it is, What it Does, and How You can Help it Along*

By Holli Beall, LMT

*What it does:* Lymph is collected in small lymphatics called lymph capillaries. From there it joins an expanding network of lymphatics leading to the left and right ducts, which return lymph to the circulatory system at the subclavian and jugular veins. During its trip through the lymphatic network, the lymph passes through nodes for filtering. Lymph from the legs, abdomen, left arm, left side of head, left neck and left side of the chest flows into the left lymphatic duct. Lymph from the right side of head, right neck, right side of the chest, and right arm flows into the right lymphatic duct.

Here is how I picture it: Imagine an underground sewer system (but cleaner). Water (lymph) collects in the gutters (lymph capillaries) and flows into a tunnel system (lymphatics). This tunnel system starts out narrow, but leads to larger and larger tunnels. Throughout this network of tunnels are grates (lymph nodes) that pick up debris that is floating in the water, preventing it from continuing on and contaminating the next section. Now a little work crew comes in (lymphocytes) to clean and break down all the nasty items stopped by the grates. Once the debris is cleaned and made harmless it is allowed to pass through the grates, back into the tunnel system where it is eventually enters one of two giant tunnels that return the water to the larger environment (your bloodstream). Occasionally the grates get clogged with more trash than the work crew can efficiently clean, and the system gets sluggish. The crew may have to call a few friends and work overtime, possibly stoking the furnace to burn some of the debris (this is where you'd run a fever). Once they catch up with the overload, the system can flow smoothly again.

*How you can help it along:* Lymph circulation is vital to life. When it slows down waste products can accumulate and stagnate, lowering your immunity, affecting normal metabolism and often producing a fatigued feeling. Lymph does not have its own system for circulating and will not move itself. Your circulatory system has the heart to move your blood, but lymph relies on external forces to create a pumping action for it. The primary force for moving lymph is the contraction of skeletal muscles, which you get from such activities as walking, breathing and exercising. Physical exertion dilates the lymph vessels, and warming your body with exercise helps lymph flow more smoothly. One of the easiest ways to improve your lymph flow is to bounce on a rebounder. The up and down action helps push the lymph along through the vessels.

Other contributors to lymph movement are the contraction of smooth muscles, pulsation from blood coursing through the arteries and compression of tissues from outside the body, as in massage. The purpose of lymphatic massage is to help clean and regenerate the tissues and organs of the body. Lymph circulation is accelerated by massage, which stimulates the activity in lymph centers, increases production of lymphocytes, and can help improve metabolism and your immune system. Other benefits include improved draining of lactic acid from the muscles, relief of muscle spasms and sluggish intestines, and help in clearing lymph nodes.

*- LYMPHATIC MASSAGE SPECIAL -*

Lymphatic massage is a very gentle, extremely relaxing type of bodywork. During the months of March and April, 5 Elements, Inc. Licensed Massage Therapy will offer a 10% discount on an hour long lymphatic massage session. To take advantage of this lymphatic massage special, purchase a gift certificate, or schedule any massage session, please call me at **847-845-9663**.

Streamline Personal Training's

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"Insider Tips for More Enjoyable Living..."



Volume III, Issue 3  
April 2006

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### Come Across An Interesting Diet, Weight Loss Or Fitness Product?

No need to guess if it's worth trying or wonder about its effectiveness. Just call me at (847) 276-7132 and I'll tell you...with no hassles and no obligation.

## Prep for Sports Leagues!

As each year passes and we get a little older, it becomes more and more important to prepare your body for upcoming sporting activities in the nicer weather. Whether it's golfing, softball, volleyball, or any other warm weather activity, your body will thank you (and resist injury better) with a couple simple steps of preparation...

- 1. Strengthen Up!** Just like professional athletes in the off-season, take some time before the sports season comes up to strengthen your muscles. Weight training will not only help prepare your joints and connective tissues for the upcoming activities, but will also give your body a metabolic boost, helping you to shed some extra fat weight before performance dates.
- 2. Eat for the Future!** One of the best ways to manage your food intake is to eat in preparation for your future activities (within the next several hours). Whether it's a weight training session, a team practice, or the big game, eating some extra quality carbohydrates along with a steady supply of protein beforehand will help your body maintain the proper energy levels for good performance.
- 3. Get Flexible!** While flexibility doesn't really lengthen the muscles, it does help your body's muscle defense systems (called proprioceptors) to become used to a greater range of motion. Not only is flexibility work relaxing, it's also one of the best ways to prevent muscle strains. Muscle strains ("pulls") are generally caused by a proprioceptive response where the muscle tenses to try and protect itself against overstretching but can't stop the muscle from being pulled so much so quickly. Daily stretching after a hot shower or some cardio to get your body warm will make a huge difference in your injury resistance from muscle strains.
- 4. Build Up!** Coming back to an activity after a couple months off requires the body to adjust. Thankfully, our bodies adjust pretty darn quickly. Work your practices up step-wise in intensity and your body shouldn't be as sore as you progress into the season.
- 5. Sleep!** If you've ever slept like a rock after a hard day of physical labor or a big workout, you know that your body has told you in no uncertain terms that it needs to repair and rejuvenate.
- 6. Drink Water!** If your body doesn't get enough water, your muscles may become more susceptible to tear injuries. Water be expelled through sweat during your sport activities, so be sure and keep the water levels high – watch out for the new 'sport' waters that can add a bunch of sugar, though.

## Do You Know Your Limits?

Pretty much everyone has heard of the term 'thinking outside the box.' There are even little desktop metal balance creations that signify this statement. And while some people are more likely to think outside the box than others, it is your natural tendency as a human being to continue to build a comfort zone around you. This comfort zone is your 'box,' and it's one of the main reasons that you either make or do not make progress in your life.

The box is really the edge of your limits. While at one time, thinking outside the box may present a novel idea, soon that becomes the norm and the edge of your limits is redefined to include that novel idea. If you want to continue to grow and develop in life, it's important to continue to recognize your box and then consequently start to develop thoughts outside of those limits. This continual redefinition of self not only provides continual fresh stimulation, but it also helps to allow your perspective and mental vocabulary to be more broad and receptive.

What are your limits? Would you like to know what you can do physically? One of the ways that I help clients find their strength is through the realization and expansion of limits. If you can put your efforts to work in a tangible arena like physical development, it's much easier to apply these kinds of techniques to the rest of your life. Even if you're a person that enjoys comforts, it's a very stimulating and life-giving process to redefine yourself in terms of your 'box.' If the time is right for your 'box' to be stretched a bit, give a call **(815) 477-0980** or e-mail [jim@findyourstrength.com](mailto:jim@findyourstrength.com) and I'll be sure to help show the steps necessary to make that possible.

### Merchant Spotlight: Blue Moon Espresso Bar and Bakery

At Blue Moon, Pam and William Guidici pride themselves on serving you an extraordinary cup of coffee. "We are dedicated to preparing and serving you the most flavorful blends and roasts, freshly ground, to ensure your coffee satisfaction, whether for espresso or fresh brewed coffee. You won't experience any burnt or bitter taste in our coffees. We offer 2%, skim, and soy milk to meet your dietary requirements."

If your preference is tea, you won't be disappointed. Select from a range of black, green, white and red Rooibos teas for your refreshment. Green, white and red Rooibos teas are high in antioxidants, reputed to be helpful with and aiding in the prevention of many medical conditions. Green and white teas contain less caffeine than coffee, and red Rooibos is naturally caffeine free. The friendly and knowledgeable staff is happy to assist you with your selection.

Everything on the bakery menu at Blue Moon is made on the premises, with no added preservatives. We are happy to work with you to prepare sweet treats to meet your dietary requirements, including gluten free and diabetic. We do not use peanuts or peanut derivatives in any recipes. Special orders for morning pastries, cookies, cakes and dessert selections are welcomed.

Pick up your refreshments to take with you, take advantage of our Wi-Fi service, or sit and relax a while. You are always welcome at Blue Moon.

Mention that you saw us in the **Fitting Fitness In™** newsletter and **receive 20% off your order over \$5.00** through April 30, 2006!



Pam and William Guidici – Owners  
2761 W. Algonquin Road, Algonquin, IL 60102 (next to Buddyz Pizzeria)  
**(847) 458-7247**

"If everything is under control, you're not going fast enough."

- Mario Andretti

### Funky Facts...

- ↳ The average life span of a major league baseball is only seven pitches.
- ↳ In the 1500s, people took their yearly baths in May. Combining this fact with a bouquet of aromatic flowers to hide odors, most people got married in June. This is the origin of the wedding bouquet.

### I'd Love to Hear From YOU!

Whether your goal is to lose weight, get in the best shape of your life, or anything in between, I can help you.

I'd love to hear from you – even if you just want to say "Hi!"

I'm full of energy, and people tell me – a pretty fun person to talk to. So please don't hesitate to call me up with any questions you have about health and fitness related issues. There's never any pressure and no obligation. I'm a resource...and a friend!

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## Better Living through Chemistry?

Have you ever looked at the list of ingredients on foods these days? If you take a look, you'll probably see things like artificial colors and artificial flavors listed on many foods. While artificial flavors and colors have helped to keep grocery costs down and to keep food looking like 'it should,' there are some hidden dangers to be aware of when ingesting foods with these types of products.

Even though I have my degree in Chemistry, I'm of the school of thought that nature knows best. To that end, it's also important to note that FDA labelling laws require only that the color or flavor itself be listed. Did you know that there are over 40 different chemicals listed in the ingredients of artificial strawberry flavor? The same goes for colorings.

Most natural foods, colors, or flavorings are quite fine for your body to process. Eating foods with artificial content puts a stress on your body to have to process materials that are not preferred (or easy to work with, from your body's perspective). Artificial colors are like paint in your food!

As a general rule, steer away from foods with artificial sweeteners, colors, and flavorings. 'Artificial' means not healthy and yet another thing that your liver will have to process (if possible) out of your body. Be label conscious and make good choices for your healthy future.

### Simple Beginnings – Eugene Sandow...

Did you know that Eugene Sandow's father was a greengrocer and his mother was a Russian emigrant? Born in 1867 in Konigsberg, East Prussia, Eugene (name taken later) was spotted by an acrobatic performer stage named "Attila," who guided Sandow in progressive weight training. "Attila" a few German colleagues had finally discovered (since weights were used from the time of the ancient Greeks) that it was possible to build muscle by using increasingly heavier weights in a regular and systematic way. Interestingly, many physicians of the day noted that such exertion was bad.

Sandow won a contest with the strongman "Samson" in England in 1889, but it was in 1894 in Chicago where Florenz Ziegfeld persuaded Sandow to perform as a physique artist instead of a weightlifter. Ziegfeld promoted Sandow by recommending a photo shoot with Sandow clad only in a fig leaf. By 1896, he was an international star.

Sandow returned to London and opened his "Physical Culture Studio," where he revolutionized the gym by using nice wood paneling, potted palms, framed mirrors and Oriental carpets. He also called his business a studio instead of a gym. It was with Sandow's vision that the modern day health club was born specifically targeted at the middle class.

### Thanks for the Kind Words!

"My weight is down from 185 to around 178 but my waist size is down to 32 in my jeans! I will be 45 this year and probably last wore 32's when is in my early twenties. Also because of my gains, my wife has hopped on board and has done very well also. Thank you so much."

- Blake Giebler, Oketo, KS