

THERAPY NEWS

VOLUME 7 ISSUE 2

SEPTEMBER 2004

Inside this issue:

Editorial	1
Support Group as an Educational Tool	1/2
Forming the Alberta Learning Lymphedema Association	2/3
In Brief	3/4
Congratulations to New Students and Teachers	4
Review Reports 2004	4/5
Conference Report	6
Articles	6
Conferences 2004 / 2005	6
Reviews 2004 / 2005	6
Administration	6

Editorial

Robert Harris, HND, RMT, CLT-LANA

As always, I am thrilled and proud to present the great work our therapists are doing in the wider community. This issue of Therapy News will feature Liz Olivas from Florida who has been a currently-certified therapist since 1994. She has developed an educational program for starting lymphedema support groups. Also Kirsten Hausmann who has been

Our Tenth Year!

currently-certified since 1996 initiated the Alberta Lymphedema Learning Association. Our Reviews just seem to keep getting better and better, according to the feedback we receive from those attending and it is great to see so many therapists keeping current and staying connected. I look forward to seeing many of you at upcoming Reviews. §

Support Group as an Educational Tool

Building a Lymphedema Support Group

Elizabeth Olivas, BFA, LMT, MLDT

A well run support group can serve our patients in many ways. Emotional support, education and active participation are motivating and uplifting. Group work enables our patients to cope with their lymphedema. Emotional support provided in a group setting assists those suffering with this condition to learn to live with, and manage their lymphedema for the long term. Lifestyle changes are intrinsic in the treatment of lymphedema. When a patient participates in group work with others making similar life changes, it helps to reduce feelings of isolation and restore hope. This in turn can be motivating for our patients to become active and willing to participate in their own process.

A support group offers us the opportunity to reinforce education. We ask that our clients comply with many new and complicated rules. We must learn to teach them so they will learn and embrace these new habits. It is important to review information frequently. Learning takes place over time and often through repetition. Our patients must learn and integrate many new skills. They must learn the guidelines of living with lymphedema, and how to wrap appropriately, how the compression garment should fit, how to exercise appropriately, how to breathe with the diaphragm and what foods to avoid. They have questions about supplements and other alternative therapies. Education is important in a successful outcome for a lymphedema patient. Our patients must be armed with information and an understanding of their own physical capacities in regards to their lymphedema. A sense of community is built in a long standing support/education group. This is empowering and motivating. One of the major obstacles we face in our profession is to understand how to motivate our patients and inspire them to comply with the limitations bestowed upon them. Lymphedema is a consuming condition to live with; it has been given the title "The Orphan Condition", neglected for far too long. A well run support group can create a comfortable space where lymphedema patients can feel safe and understood while

they learn to manage living with lymphedema.

Outline

1. Purpose: It is important as a facilitator to be clear on the purpose of the group. This will keep the group focused and maintain efficient use of the time.

- a) **Encouragement/Support**
- b) **Dialogue**
- c) **Education**
- d) **Remedial Exercises**
- e) **Diaphragmatic Breathing**

2. Structure: A flexible structure is best. Have several class outlines ready and vary them according to the immediate needs of the group. The group may vary widely from week to week. It is important to have a sense of the mood of the participants. New attendants may arrive with feelings of fear, anxiety and depression. Encourage regular attendees to participate in helping to educate and support the newcomers.

Prepare a basic class structure:

- a) **Introductions**
- b) **Discussions**
- c) **Articles**
- d) **Questions and Answers**
- e) **Exercises and Breathing Techniques**

Allow for variations in the plan:

- f) **New participants** – Introductions, questions and answers, review do's and don'ts, diaphragmatic breathing, relaxation techniques.
- g) **Regular participants** – Review articles, breath work, exercises, self care and self bandaging.
- h) **Family and Friends** – Allow visitors to participate with questions and answers.
- i) **Health Care Professionals** – Encourage the group to help educate other health care professionals who may show up.



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“A well run support group can create a comfortable space where lymphedema patients can feel safe and understood while they learn to manage living with lymphedema.”

Outline

Cont'd from page 1

3. **Content:** Participants are hungry for information. Stay well informed. Present articles and evidence of documented and clinical studies. Ask them to bring in any articles or information they discover. It is important to keep the focus on the ongoing education of the patient. Remember most people learn through repetition. Invite speakers occasionally who may introduce new information about techniques, garments or research.

a) **Packets** - Prevention information, a description of what lymphedema is, a description of the recommended treatment, a list of local therapists, diagrams of exercises and diaphragmatic breathing techniques.

b) **File** - Keep a file of articles on lymphedema and other health related subjects.

c) **Include** - Encouraging words, poems and essays.

4. **Funding:** It may be possible to find a local charitable organization that may be interested in hosting a lymphedema support group. Businesses in your community may volunteer to help with some expenses. It may also be possible to have your group supported by a grant from a charitable foundation.

a) **Cancer Support Centers**

b) **Local Hospitals**

c) **Catholic Charities**

d) **Jewish Family Services**

e) **City organizations**

f) **Private Foundations**

Liz Olivas was certified by The Dr. Vodder School in the practice of Manual Lymph Drainage® in August of 1994. Liz was part owner of one the first lymphedema clinics in the South Florida area. In 1997 she opened a private practice that focused on the long term and maintenance care of lymphedema patients. She organized and developed “Movement, Breath and Self Care”. This is an educational support group offered by The Wellness Community in Boca Raton, Florida. The Wellness Community offers psycho-social support for cancer patients and their families.

Liz currently is the owner of the Therapeutic Alternative in Boca Raton, Florida. Her thriving practice not only focuses on Manual Lymph Drainage®, but on Ortho-Bionomy® as well. She is pioneering the blending of these two very effective modalities to provide her patients with optimal care. §

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Email address: Istadevata@aol.com

Forming the Alberta Lymphedema Learning Association

Kirsten Hausmann, LMT



In March 2003 I met with Diane (a patient of mine) and talked about making an association to support and provide the proper treatment for lymphedema patients. Phone calls were made to some 400 PTs, OTs, RMTs, LMTs and hospitals in Calgary. We found that these clinics were working on lymphedema patients but were also looking for

information to help these people.

Our process then began with contacting the Alberta Government and completing the documents to become an organization under the Alberta Society's Act. The next step was putting together a team of people who

would help make this happen. On April 01, 2003 a group of patients, therapists, fitters and garment venders met and we started delegating "jobs" in the association. Once this team came together it became apparent that it would be advantageous to apply for charitable status. The documentation was completed and we became a not-for-profit charitable organization. The Alberta Lymphedema Learning Association (ALLA) became a reality.

ALLA works to make a difference and empower affected individuals and their families to help manage this condition. ALLA works from the patient standpoint.

We made a list of certified therapists and certified garment fitters and sent it out to all the medical facilities, private clinics and hospitals in the city and received interest from the local Tom Baker Cancer Centre. A medical doctor from the centre came to a couple of our meetings and liked what we were trying to provide for the public, i.e. better education about lymphedema and helpful information about preventative measures.

Since then the out-patient program now has a pamphlet about lymphedema that includes the names of the certified therapists and fitters in Calgary.

THE QUALITY IS IN OUR HANDS:
TRAINING EXCELLENCE

Forming the Alberta Lymphedema Learning Association

Cont'd from page 2



Kirsten Hausmann, LMT

We have come a long way and are mighty proud. The workload has been distributed over a growing group of people so no one is too burdened. ALLA has been on the Global TV station program twice. We have been contacted by

Readers Digest and have an article in a Dutch magazine for lymphedema. We are happy to help anyone with information about how to start an organization.

Needless to say our workload as lymphedema therapists has increased with this new communication with the Tom Baker Cancer Centre. What is helping one of us - helps us all!!! §

Sincerely, Kirsten Hausmann

Certified Vodder-therapist since 1996
Email address: ki_hausmann@hotmail.com



In Brief

Tissue Tonometer now available to Dr. Vodder therapists

Finally a simple and relatively inexpensive, yet accurate measuring tool is available to practitioners. This tool can be used to objectively assess patients in your clinic. It is fast and accurate as well as reproducible. Please see the enclosed brochure for more information.



Tissue Tonometer measuring the tissue in a lymphedema patient.

Lebed Exercise program teams up with Dr. Vodder School – North America



Sherry Lebed Davis

After a successful demonstration of her method of exercising for lymphedema patients at the Victoria Review, Sherry Lebed Davis will offer an add-on day to all the 2005 Reviews in North America. This one-day program will train therapists to teach the Lebed

method to their lymphedema patients and is based on Sherry's program: Focus on healing through

movement and dance. The Lebed method has been used since 1980 with breast cancer survivors and there have been research articles published on this method. This is a specially designed certification course for our therapists who will be certified Lebed Method Lymphedema instructors upon successful completion of the course. We encourage you to take this unique opportunity. Please see the enclosed flyer for more details and how to sign up for this course.

Backward step in New Jersey

Despite intense lobbying, the NJ Board of Nursing which governs the practice of massage has decided that Massage Therapists will be prohibited from providing decongestive therapy. They will also be prohibited from providing MLD when it is conducted as a part of decongestive therapy. Massage Therapists will be permitted to provide MLD for the purpose of "promoting and maintaining health and well-being of clients." Thanks to Jennifer Anna-Petsche, a Vodder trained therapist for her efforts.

Resource for patients with cancer

We were asked to make our therapists aware of the American Psychosocial Oncology Society which promotes the psychological, social, and physical well being of patients with cancer and their families at all stages of disease and survivorship through clinical care, education, research, and advocacy. <http://www.apos-society.org/> Thank you Sue Spencer for forwarding this information.

Teachers

Two of our teachers, Koby Blanchfield and Anne Bramham have now gained additional certification to teach the Advanced Body class offered to Estheticians and Spa Therapists. Koby Blanchfield has also gained certification to teach the Advanced Neck and Face class to Estheticians. Congratulations also to Dee Jones in the UK on completing her Therapy II and III training program.

"Tissue Tonometer:
A simple, accurate
measuring tool for
therapists to assess
patients."

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In Brief

Cont'd from page 3

Dr. Wohlgenannt

Since our last issue of the Newsletter we have learned that Dr. Melanie Wohlgenannt will be staying on as medical director of the Dr. Vodder Schools until the end of this year. She will then be leaving her position to focus on her appointment with the Austrian government in the department of Public Health. If you wish to contact Dr. Wohlgenannt, her new email address is: m.wohlgenannt@tirol.gv.at.

Congratulations

Edith Mulhall, RN, LMT was recently awarded the Award of Merit for 2003 by the Massage Therapy Association of Manitoba for her contribution to the field

of massage therapy through the use of the Vodder Method of Manual Lymph Drainage. Edith wrote: "Since certifying in 2000, I have been to the NLN conference in Chicago; the International Congress in Montreal and did a presentation there; the CAWC conference in Vancouver, as well as having attained S1 and S2 levels in wound care with the CAWC; published an article on palliative care; spent 2 weeks at the Vodder clinic in Austria to assist a patient and further my own experience; wrote numerous letters to the provincial health minister and the premier regarding lymphedema; did a presentation for Manitoba Health re: lymphedema; did a presentation for the CRNM (College of Registered Nurses of Manitoba) wound care group". §

To contact any of our newly - certified or other currently - certified therapists, please visit the "Find a Therapist" page of the website at vodderschool.com

Congratulations:

Victoria, B.C. (August 2004) Therapy II & III



Therapy II / III Class in Victoria, B.C.

Congratulations also to Gennadiy Krichevskiy, CMT of Cranston, RI, and Elizabeth McMillen, BAppSc, PT of Perth, WA, Australia, for the completion of their certification in August of 2004. §

(Patty) Patricia Adamik RMT	Houston, TX
April Yu-Ying Chang MT, LAc	Austin, TX
Tatiane Dias Vicente PT	São Paulo, Brazil
Loni Horsley RMT	Abbotsford, BC
Clara Jacko LPN,PTA,MT	Massey, ON
Madhuchanda Le Roc RMT	Moncton, NB
Ann Lopez LMT	Coeur d'Alene, ID
Erin Murphy LMT	Lighthouse Point, FL
Ruth Newnam LMT	Chapel Hill, NC
Eurindia Ochsenhein RMT	Houston, TX
Lena Pittman MT	Chicago, IL
Kathleen Sharp CMT	Livermore, CA

Review Reports

Adelaide Review April 2004

A very successful Review was held in Adelaide in April with 32 therapists from Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Hong Kong and Singapore in attendance. This was the first time that Hildegard Wittlinger visited Australia and the first time that many therapists there had met her. Case presentations were made by Alison Beatty, OT on a patient with cellulitis and edema; Ros Roberts, RN on a patient after a MVI with severe tibia fracture; Margie Hare, MT on a patient with juvenile rheumatoid arthritis; Marg Trebilcock, RN on a patient with leg lymphedema and complications. Presentations were also made by Liz

Cowen on the Medi garments, Nicky Conway on bioimpedance and Ann Angel on laser therapy. A problem-solving workshop was also held with two patients who had challenging venous congestion and lymphedema. Hildegard gave an inspiring lecture on the history of the development of MLD and Dr. Vodder as well as showing a video on the functional anatomy of the LVS. She also showed a remarkable video of a debulking procedure carried out on a Walchsee patient. Robert Harris presented new research that has been carried out with Prof. Piller at Flinders Medical Centre demonstrating the effectiveness of MLD alone.

Review Reports

Cont'd from page 4

Prof. Piller then gave lectures on early detection of lymphedema, risk reduction, surgical procedures and identifying high risk genotypes for primary lymphedema. He also described new directions in treatment and gave a demonstration of the new version of the Vital Essence CD Rom.



Recertified Therapists from the Adelaide Review

Stowe Review June 2004

Another successful Review was held in Stowe with 41 therapists. Case presentations were made by Kara Jacobsen, PT on the treatment of a six month old baby with lymphedema of the lower extremities; Debbie Hicks, LMT on the treatment of a large wound after excision and treatment of lymph nodes involved in Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma; Pattie Loebbs, RN on the treatment of a secondary arm lymphedema patient with a large sac of fluid and tissue on the upper arm. A patient workshop was held with two interesting cases where the therapists problem-solved assessment and treatment challenges. One patient was a complex, morbidly-obese patient with probable lipodystrophy, lymphedema and venous problems. Another patient also attended who had throat cancer treated by extensive radiation, and discussion centered around treatment of the lymphedema in the neck. Andreas Wittlinger gave a hydrotherapy exercise workshop. Professor Weissleder gave a thorough update on the latest research in lipo-lymphosuction, intermittent pneumatic compression, the effects of MLD on the autonomic nervous system, microsurgical lymphatic techniques, morbidity after cancer, and MLD and tumour spread.



Tabitha Tanner, Andreas Wittlinger, and Cathie Scheaet

Prof. Weissleder discussed the low risk of spreading metastases after MLD and felt that as long as the active cancer area was avoided, there would be little harm in doing MLD. Robert Harris presented on

the latest research carried out with Prof. Neil Piller on the effectiveness of MLD in treating breast cancer-related edema. Prof. Wittlinger gave a talk on the history of MLD and Dr. Vodder's work.

Victoria Review August 2004

St. Margaret's School was the host location for this 10th Review in Victoria. Andreas Wittlinger, PT and Robert Harris, RMT conducted the practical sessions which included pool exercises at the beautiful Commonwealth Pool nearby. Judi Greening of Vaillancourt Company discussed the use of Medi garments in lymphedema treatment. On the Saturday afternoon of the Review we had a great demonstration and introduction to the Lebed method of therapeutic exercise for lymphedema with Sherry Lebed Davis. Case presentations were made by Krystle Shapiro, LMT on a patient with cervical cancer with vaginal complications and lower extremity lymphedema; Julie Brokaw, PT on a patient with breast cancer related lymphedema who is morbidly obese; Denny Paccagnan, RMT on a patient with breast cancer whose lymphedema began after weight training; Alice van Fleet, LMT on a patient with trauma-related lymphedema after a motorbike injury; Marie Lew, LMT on a patient with post-cancer arm lymphedema who had



Dr. Morizio Ballicu, Angela Vollmer and Prof. Weissleder

also suffered a stroke. Presentations were also made by Kirsten Hausmann, LMT on the formation of the Alberta Lymphedema Learning Association and by Pamela Hodgson RMT who is in a Master of Science program studying the impact of lymphedema and education of local medical communities in Newfoundland.

On Sunday morning we were joined by about 30 patients and other health care professionals for presentations by Prof. Weissleder on current research into lymphology and lymphedema treatment, by Robert Harris on Australian research, by Dr. Ballicu (president of BSN Jobst) on the current position of BSN Jobst in North America and by Angela Vollmer on garment fitting for challenging cases. Angela gave a demonstration of fitting a garment for a patient with a more difficult leg lymphedema. §



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“Sherry Lebed Davis led a successful introduction to a new lymphedema exercise program at the Victoria Review.”

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Administration

There have been a number of changes since July at the office. Shannon MacGregor is on medical leave and Nadine Barath is no longer working for us. We are very grateful to two new administrators who now work at the School office. Ellie Karkheck is now acting full time administrator and Linda Haas works part time. §

Conference Report

5th Australasian Lymphology Association conference report

Robert Harris

Brisbane, Queensland, Australia played host to this conference at the end of March and over 200 therapists and clinicians attended. A one day patient conference was also held in conjunction at the same venue. Research in Australia is moving the treatment of lymphedema forward. Researchers such as Dr. Robyn Box of the University of Queensland spoke on the assessment and diagnosis of lymphedema beyond measurement alone, allowing earlier intervention for lymphedema patients. Measuring standards have been implemented by the ALA and R. Taylor et. al. at the University of NSW reported on the reliability and validity of arm volume measurements. They found that arm circumference measurements were greater than water displacement measurements in 50 % of cases, with an average of 12% greater volumes using

circumference measurements. Studies on structured exercise programs and aquatic therapy for lymphedema patients were presented with an emphasis on gradual, moderate intensity exercises that did not exacerbate the lymphedema. A fascinating lecture was presented by Dr. W. Melrose on filariasis-related lymphedema. Current research shows that the filarial worms do not block the lymph vessels, rather cause dilation, incompetent valves and an inflammatory response. (see Melrose, W.D. (2002) Lymphatic Filariasis – new insights into an old disease. International Journal of Parasitology, 32, 947-960). Dr. Ethel Földi was the keynote speaker and spoke on Differential Diagnosis of Lymphedema and Fluid Retention Syndrome.

The Dr. Vodder School was present at the conference with an exhibit and several Vodder certified therapists. Robert Harris presented a paper on research work with Prof. Neil Piller, evaluating the effectiveness of MLD in patients with post-mastectomy lymphedema. §

Articles

Try this search engine to find more research articles. It is free to sign up: www.medscape.com.

The current issue of **Lymphology: Volume 37, No. 2** (June 2004) has a number of interesting articles on evaluating alternate / complementary treatment in lymphology. These include a trial in France on the efficacy of Ginkor Fort (includes an extract of Ginkgo Biloba) which has been reported to have a lymphotonic effect. Another article is on the use of the Sun Ancon Chi machine, an aerobic exerciser tested in Australia and shown to have an effect on reducing volume. There is also an article on a new

apparatus from Brazil that is a passive exerciser which may also help to reduce limb volume.

Schmeller, W. and Meier-Vollrath, I: Modern Therapy of Lipedema, Combination of conservative and surgical procedures (in German with English summary). LymphForsch 8 (1) 2004; 22-26. Lipedema has traditionally been treated by CDT but this article demonstrates that in combination with a specialized liposuction technique, better results may be obtained. Dr. Schmeller can be contacted at info@hanse-klinik.com. §

Conferences 2004 / 2005

National Lymphedema Network Conference, October 21–24, 2004, Reno, NV, USA.
Contact: www.lymphnet.org or call (510) 208-3200

World Breast Cancer Conference, June 8–12, 2005, Halifax, NS, Canada.
Contact: www.worldbreastcancerconf.ca or call, (877) 811-9222

International Society of Lymphology Congress, September 26-30, 2005, Salvador, Bahia, Brazil.
Contact: lymphology2005@aol.com

Lymphology Association of North America (LANA) exams, 2005:
April 11-30 (deadline March 22 for application) and October 10-29 (deadline September 20 for application).
Contact www.clt-lana.org for more information. §

Reviews for 2004 / 2005

Toronto, ON

November 18–20, 2004 in association with Lymphovenous Ontario at the ManuLife Centre and Sunnybrook Regional Cancer Centre: Prof. Weissleder and Prof. Miles Johnson are the main speakers.

St. Pete Beach, FL

January 28–30, 2005. Join us at the oceanfront Dolphin Beach Resort. Prof. Weissleder is the main speaker.

Please note the change in location from Eckerd College.

Stowe, VT

June 03–05, 2005. Join us at the Golden Eagle Resort. Prof. Weissleder is the main speaker.

Victoria, BC

August 29–31, 2005. Join us at St. Margaret's School. Prof. Weissleder is the main speaker. §

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