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Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances
Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!

Help For Persistent Or Recurring Swelling

By Dr. Rita Louise

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by: **Dr. Rita Louise**

Like the arteries, veins and capillaries that transport blood through our bodies, our bodies also contains an extensive drainage system that returns water and proteins from our tissues back to the bloodstream. Called the lymphatic system, it is part of our immune system and works to defend the body from diseases caused by viruses, bacteria, or fungi.

The lymphatic system has two major functions. First, it works to regulate the amount of fluids within our bodies. Secondly, it is responsible for "taking out the trash", that is collecting waste products, such as dead blood cells and pathogens from the interstitial fluid (the fluid that fills the spaces around cells) and filters it before returning it to the bloodstream.

The lymphatic system is made up of lymph vessels that carry lymph, a protein-rich fluid that is transported through the lymph vessels, and lymph nodes which filter out germs and toxins. There are over 100 lymph nodes throughout the body, with the majority of them being located in the neck, groin and armpits. Lymphatic vessels contain valves that prevent the lymph from flowing backwards within the system. Within the lymphatic vessels, lymph is transported through the vessels and moves via the squeezing action of their neighboring skeletal muscles.

When the movement of lymph through the body becomes impaired, it will leak out of the lymphatic capillaries and cause the surrounding tissues to swell. This condition is called lymphedema. Lymphedema occurs when the amount of lymph fluid in the body exceeds the body's ability to transport it. This causes the lymph fluid to accumulate in the tissues, where it causes swelling, particularly of the arms and legs.

There are two types of lymphedema. Doctors don't know what causes Primary Lymphedema, but it can be present at birth, or can develop later on in life. Fortunately, this condition is rare. Secondary Lymphedema is a condition that is not often talked about, but often affects individuals who have undergone surgery, such as cancer surgery where lymph nodes are commonly removed. It can also

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affect individuals who have undergone radiation therapy, which can damage lymph nodes and cause scar tissue to form ultimately interfering with the flow of lymph. It can also be experienced by individuals who have experienced a severe trauma or infection.

In the initial stages of this chronic condition, Lymphedema often begins with swelling in a hand or foot, particularly the one closest to where the surgery has occurred or radiation therapy has taken place. If left unchecked, the protein-rich lymph can continue to accumulate, leading to increased swelling and a hardening of the tissues. This increases your risk of developing an infection or may interfere or impair the function of the limb.

Lymphedema can develop in any part of the body. If you experience persistent or recurring swelling anywhere in your body, it is important to seek medical advice. Early intervention with this disorder greatly improves the long term outcome of the disease's progression.

Recommendations For Wellness

Avoid rigorous, repetitive movements or heavy lifting.

Women, if your arm is affected, get rid of extra 50 lbs that you carry over your shoulder and trade it in for a purse that has hand straps.

If your arm or leg starts to ache, lie down and elevate it.

Wear loose fitting clothes, jewelry, socks and undergarments that may restrict lymphatic flow.

Wear a compression sleeve or stocking on the affected limb.

Keep your "at risk" limb clean and avoid activities that may irritate or damage the skin. Careful skin care may reduce the risk of lymphedema by helping you to avoid infection.

Massage, particularly lymphatic massage has been shown to help increase lymph drainage. You can do this yourself or work with a qualified massage therapist who has been specially trained in how to perform manual lymph drainage techniques.

Begin a gentle exercise program. Exercise and muscle movement can help drain lymph fluid. (Consult with your doctor prior to beginning any exercise program).

Drink plenty of water. Water is critical for proper lymph drainage.

Echinacea has a long history of improving lymph filtration and drainage.

Garlic is known for being able to stimulate the lymph system to throw off waste materials.

Oregon grape can be used to help reduce the inflammation of the lymphatic system and works to help cleanse the lymph.

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Poke Root has been known to help stimulate the body and aid its ability to remove waste materials that may be trapped in the tissues. It can also help improve the elasticity of tissues that may have experienced hardening due to congestion.

Burdock, red clover and mullein are known to thin lymph fluid and enhance lymphatic drainage.

Herbal combinations such as Nature's Sunshine's Lymphatic Drainage, Lymphomax or Lymphostim are designed to stimulate the immune system, fight infections and support the lymphatic system.

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Dr. Rita Louise, PhD is a Naturopathic Physician and a 20-year veteran in the Human Potential Field, and it is her unique gift as a medical intuitive that enlivens her work. Author of the books "Avoiding the Cosmic 2x4" and "The Power Within: A Psychic Healing Primer", Dr. Rita Louise, Ph.D. can help you identify what is really going on and provide you with straightforward guidance and advice. She can be reached by calling 972-475-3393 or visiting her website at

Could This Be Arthritis In My Hands

By Rusty Ford

Ask Rusty

Arthritis Questions answered by Rusty Ford Editor of

Could this be arthritis in my hands

Hi Rusty. A few days ago, I slightly injured a finger on my hand. Now my hand is swelling with severe joint pain in the fingers. At first I thought this was a possible sprain in that region, but now my other hand is showing the same swelling of the fingers and pain of the joints. Should I go check this out right away? It doesn't seem to be getting worse today, but the pain and swelling are persistent. Could this be a sudden arthritis attack? I'm 38 years old and in good health (I just had a check-up at the doctor last week and the blood work came back okay).

Your advice is greatly appreciated.

Answer

Ouch, a little sprain is not supposed to do that. Unfortunately some times it does. I am sorry to hear about this. It is not unusual for arthritis to begin in an effected joint. It is not the norm for it to set in so

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quickly. There are different kinds of arthritis that can effect the hands and feet that can cause swelling. It is possible that arthritis was already beginning but not showing symptoms yet but this triggered a symptomatic response.

I am concerned that the pain is bilateral, effecting both sides. I doubt it is anything extremely serious but it would be good to see your doctor. The sooner the better. If nothing else, your doctor will be able to treat the pain and swelling. But if it is arthritis or one of the other conditions that can cause this type of swelling in the fingers the earlier the diagnosis the better.

I wish you good health.

Rusty

Rusty Ford is the editor of

one of the internets largest arthritis web sites.

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