

Book review

Dr. Vodder's Manual Lymph Drainage: A Practical Guide

By Hildegard Wittlinger, Dieter Wittlinger, Andreas Wittlinger & Maria Wittlinger

Thieme, Stuttgart, 2011, 152 pages, paperback, £45.99

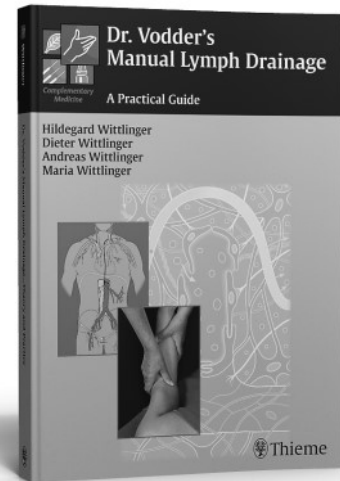
ISBN: 978-3-1314-3191-2

This is an authorized translation of the German edition of *Dr. Vodder's Manual Lymph Drainage: A Practical Guide*, which was published in 2009. Primarily aimed at students and practitioners of Emil Vodder's method of lymphoedema management, it is an up-to-date reference book that is divided into five clearly defined sections.

The first part covers the theoretical basics of manual lymph drainage (MLD), describing the anatomy and physiology of the cardiovascular and lymphatic systems, and the function and qualities of the interstitium. The authors also explain drainage pathways, and the staging, classification and development of lymphoedema. This section is generously illustrated with colour illustrations, diagrams and tables. It ends with an excellent set of review questions, an answer key and page references that facilitate self-directed learning.

The principles, aims and effects of MLD are dealt with in the second part. Simple analogies are used to explain the interaction between the cardiovascular and lymphatic systems in the maintenance of fluid balance in the tissues, and the practical implications of this for treatment methods. Indications and contraindications for MLD are discussed, and thorough assessment, evaluation and documentation are highlighted as the basis for successful treatment outcomes.

Section 3 is devoted to the practical application of MLD and this is the largest segment of the book. The various approaches used and the relevant treatment guidelines are clearly explained, and the reader is then taken on a step-by-step journey through the sequences for each individual part of the body. Special techniques that can be incorporated to treat various pathologies, or skin and tissue changes, are also included. Each step is accompanied throughout



by colour photographs that clearly show the correct hand positions for MLD and the direction required for each movement.

The fourth part describes the individual components of combined decongestive therapy, offering overviews of the intensive and maintenance phases of treatment, the role of skin care, the different types and strengths of compression garments, and the importance of including therapeutic exercise and breathing techniques. Compression therapy is discussed here, and the authors provide information on bandaging materials, the appropriate pressures to be applied, precautions and contraindications. Step-by-step instructions on the application of bandages for the upper and lower limbs are again fully illustrated with colour photographs. A brief description of Kinesio taping and how it may be applied as a useful support to lymphoedema management ends the practical section of the book.

The final part provides the historical background to the work of Emil Vodder. It contains the preface to the 1978 edition of his manual, the first publication of his work from 1936, and a 2003 tribute to his life and achievements by Professor Hildegard Wittlinger.

Dr. Vodder's Manual Lymph Drainage offers a concise and informative guide to the theory and practice of MLD. The text is well presented, easy to follow, and has excellent visual detail with

clear illustrations and full-colour photographs included throughout. Numerous tips and space for personal notes are included in every chapter. I would recommend this manual as a valuable resource for the library of any lymphoedema clinic.

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