

Applying neuromuscular tape

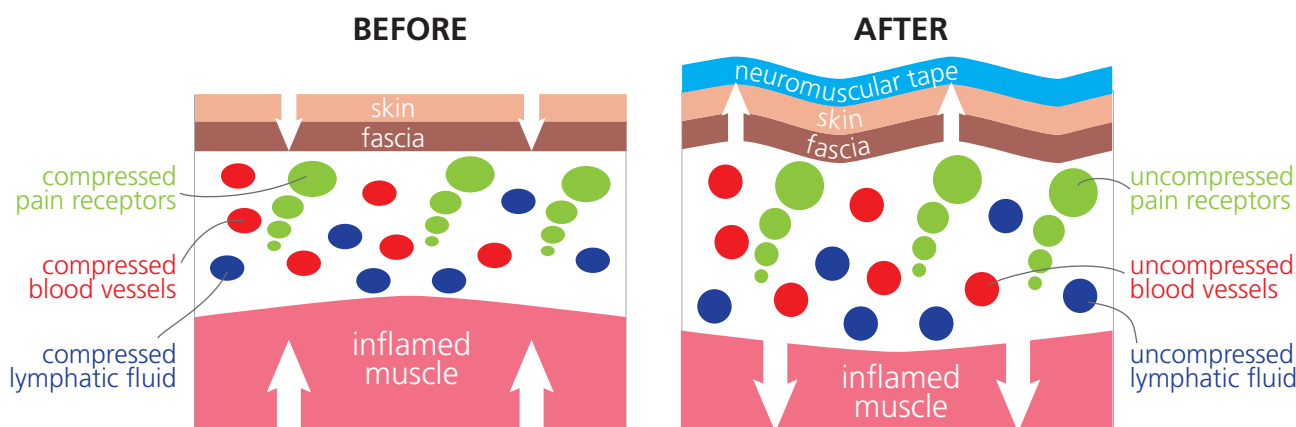
This leaflet has been created by the Lymphoedema clinic team at Mount Vernon Cancer Centre to help patients who have been recommended to use neuromuscular tape to reduce lymphoedema swelling.

How does neuromuscular tape help reduce lymphoedema swelling?

Neuromuscular tape is elastic; it is different from the tape used to secure wound dressings in place.

Applying tape to stretched skin will lift the skin slightly. This can reduce pain by reducing the pressure on the cells which register pain.

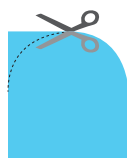
This lifting of the skin also promotes lymphatic drainage from the area, encouraging lymph to flow from an area in the body that isn't draining lymph effectively to an area that is draining normally.



How do I apply the tape?

Do not apply tape on to a wound, infected skin or delicate skin, eg, eyelid.

1. Apply the tape to clean, dry skin; do not apply any creams or moisturiser.
2. Cut the tape to the required length.
3. Trim round the corners of the ends of the tape to reduce the risk of the tape lifting away from the skin.
4. Peel off the backing at the end of the tape and stick the exposed end on the skin in the area to which you would like the fluid to drain.
5. Position yourself so that the skin is stretched. Peel off the backing and stick the tape to your skin, stretching the tape as required until the end of the tape is placed where you have swelling.



- When stretching the tape, do not stretch the ends (last inch) in order to improve adhesion to the skin.
- Stretch the tape a small amount to encourage drainage from an area. Stretch it more to cover firm tissue and scars.
- Do not overstretch the tape as this may cause skin irritation.
- 6. Gently rub along the length of the tape to activate the skin glue to stick to your skin.
- 7. Tape should be reapplied when it starts to peel off, usually after 4–5 days.

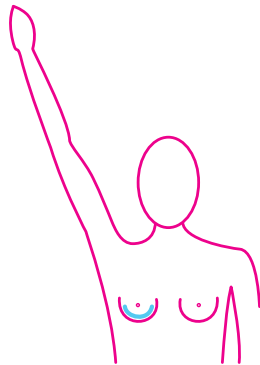
You can bathe and swim as normal. Pat the tape dry with a towel; do not rub the tape as this may cause it to peel off.

Correction tape

For fibrosis (hardness), eg, under the chin or on a breast:

1. Cut a strip of tape and trim to round the ends.
2. Tear the backing in the centre of the tape and peel it back, leaving approximately an inch of backing on each end of the tape.
3. Holding the tape at both ends, stretch it to 50-80% of maximum stretch and apply it to the fibrotic area over stretched skin.

To stretch the skin:



- Under the chin: tip your head back.
 - To the breast: raise your arm above your head. You may need help in applying the tape.
4. When the tape is in position, remove the backing from each end and, without stretching the ends, stick them to the skin.

Reducing softer oedema

Use long strips of tape starting where you do not have swelling (towards which the lymph will be encouraged to move) and ending where you have swelling.

1. Cut the tape to the required length. Either cut lengthways into several (4-5) narrow strips, or cut into a fan by cutting lengthways except for the last inch.
2. Trim the corners of the ends of each strip.
3. Peel off the backing at the end of the fan or strips and place on an area without swelling.
4. Peel off the backing from the strips and place them on the skin, ending where you have swelling.
5. Apply two fan tapes or sets of individually cut strips on top of each other in a criss-cross pattern; alternatively place the strips in a wave-like pattern to increase lymph drainage.



Useful YouTube videos

Kinesiology tape for neck and face swelling or lymphoedema - treatment for lymphatic drainage

www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z5gwXH3iUZO



Lymphatic taping technique for legs

www.youtube.com/watch?v=qyaKyD-dR2k



Negative pressure therapy for lymphatic drainage and lymphoedema

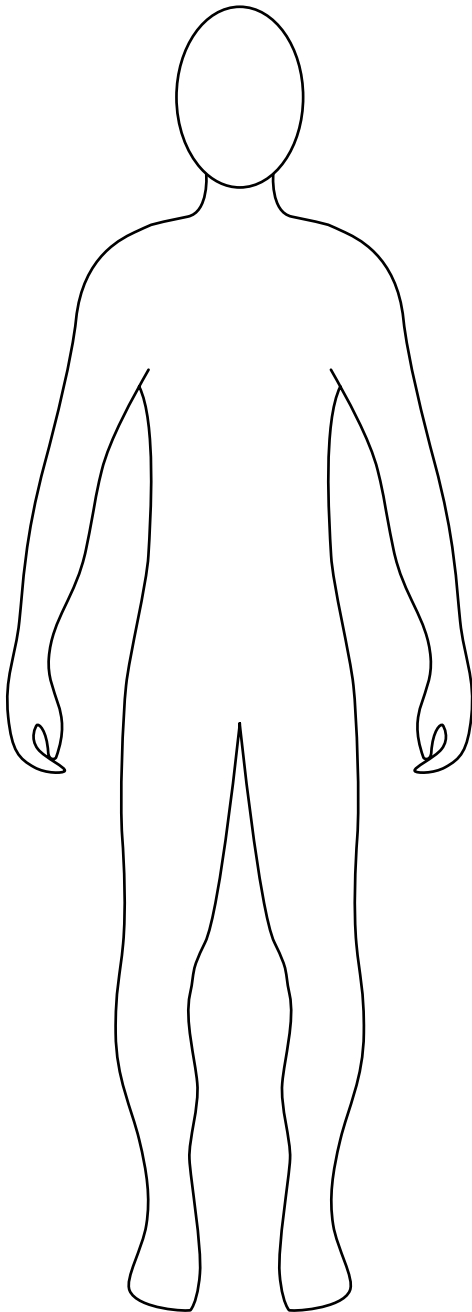
www.youtube.com/watch?v=7tGypQK-q40



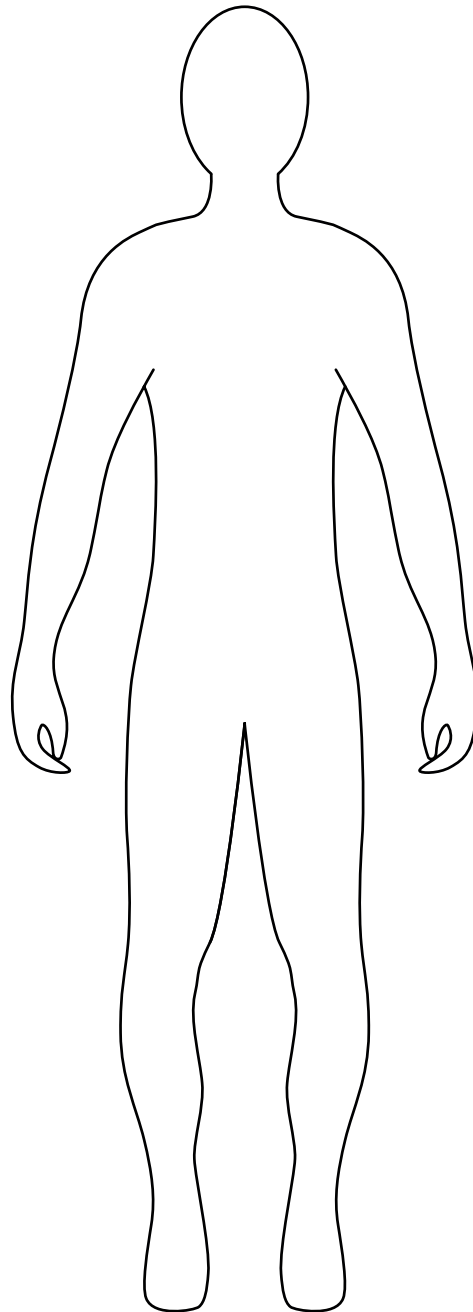
Direct links to these videos are available at:
www.ljmc.org/information/lymphoedema/

If you have any questions about applying neuromuscular tape, please call the Lymphoedema Clinic team at Mount Vernon Cancer Centre on **020 3826 2635**

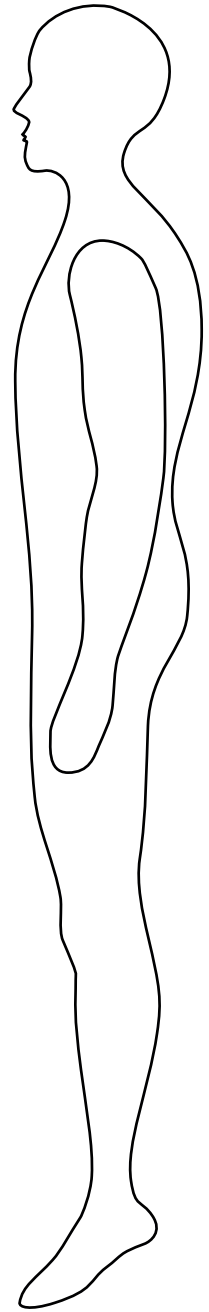
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Front



Back



Side