

MLD

After Plastic Surgery

LESS SWELLING • FASTER HEALING • SMOOTHER RESULTS

Gentle support for your healing journey

Why Plastic Surgery?

Plastic surgery may be performed for many reasons. Reconstructive procedures can restore function or appearance after burns, trauma, cancer treatment, or congenital conditions. Cosmetic procedures may include tummy tucks, liposuction, breast augmentation, butt lifts, and removal of excess skin.

Sometimes plastic surgery is considered elective and not covered by insurance. Other times, it may be medically necessary. For example, skin-removal surgery after significant weight loss (panniculectomy, abdominoplasty, brachioplasty or thigh lift) can be either:



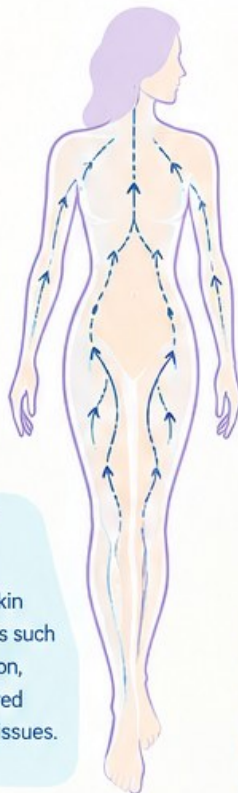
Elective / Cosmetic

Performed primarily to improve body contour or appearance.



Medically Necessary / Reconstructive

Performed because excess skin causes documented problems such as rashes, infections, ulceration, difficulty with hygiene, impaired mobility, or other functional issues.



Regardless of the reason for surgery, the body responds to surgical trauma with inflammation and swelling. This is a normal part of healing—but excessive or prolonged swelling can be uncomfortable and may affect mobility and recovery. That's where **Manual Lymphatic Drainage (MLD)** may have a role.

MLD After Plastic Surgery: The Secret to Faster, Smoother Recovery

Manual Lymphatic Drainage is a specialized, incredibly gentle massage technique designed to stimulate the lymphatic system. Unlike a deep tissue massage, which works the muscles, MLD focuses entirely on the superficial layers of the skin where the initial lymph vessels reside. By using light, rhythmic strokes, a certified lymphedema therapist helps pump trapped fluid out of the surgical areas and back into the body's natural filtration system.

(Note: It's important it's a certified lymphedema therapist with training in post-op plastic surgery because drainage pathways can change after certain procedures, scars impact the flow of fluid, etc.)

Why MLD is Beneficial Post-Plastic Surgery ¹⁻⁴



Reduces Intense Swelling (edema)

Moves stagnant fluid away from incision sites, reduces tight, uncomfortable pressure and helps drain inflammatory particles to speed up healing.



Minimizes Bruising

Clears trapped cellular debris and stagnant fluid, helping your body process and fade deep bruising faster.



Reduces Fibrosis and Seroma Formation

Keeps fluid moving so tissues heal smoothly. (If a seroma develops, it may need to be aspirated by your physician. This is important because they can become infected.)



Alleviates Pain and Relaxes

Decreases swelling, relieves pressure on nerves, and soothes the nervous system. EEG studies show MLD increases relaxing alpha brainwaves while decreasing stress-related beta and gamma waves. ⁵⁻⁷



Speeds Up Scar Healing

Reduced swelling means fresh, nutrient-rich blood can reach your incisions, promoting cleaner, flatter, and less noticeable scars.

The Power Team: MLD and Compression



While MLD actively moves the fluid out, compression garments are essential to keep it from rushing back in. Following procedures like tummy tucks, lipo, or skin removal, your surgeon will likely fit you with a medical-grade compression garment. (Your certified lymphedema therapist may also be able to help.)

Compression acts as a supportive anchor. It holds the tissues in place, reduces dead space, and maintains the progress made during your MLD sessions. Together, MLD and compression form the ultimate post-op protocol to ensure your results look exactly as you and your surgeon intended.



When to Start

Every surgeon has specific post-op guidelines, but many recommend starting MLD within the first week following surgery—sometimes as early as days 2 to 4 for procedures like liposuction.



Always clear any post-op therapies with your surgeon first.

Your body worked hard to get you through surgery. Give it the gentle support it needs to heal beautifully, comfortably, and quickly!

