

# An Interview with Bruno Chikly, MD

by Sharon Weiselfish, PhD, PT  
Special to PT & OT Today

Bruno Chikly, MD, is a French physician whose medical education includes training in endocrinology, surgery, neurology and psychiatry, in addition to Oriental medicine, acupuncture and osteopathy. His doctoral thesis, addressing the lymphatic system, its historical evolution and the manual lymphatic drainage technique, was awarded the Medal of

## What is Lymph Drainage Therapy?

Lymph drainage has only recently been recognized by the Western medical community. In the 1960s, lymph drainage was tested and proven effective for more than 20,000 European patients. Today, it is widely used in Europe — prescribed by physicians and used by physical therapists in hospitals —

and how to move the wrist in both the active and passive phases in slow, wave-like movements. The result is the release of waste and harmful toxins from the tissues.

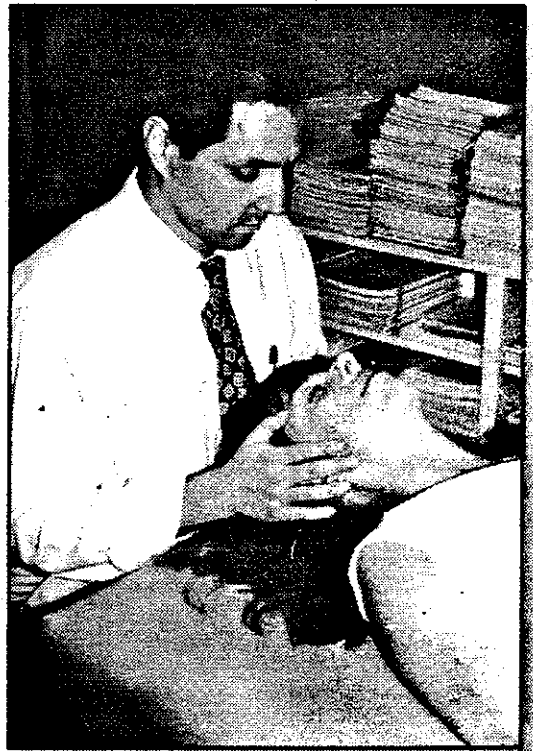
## When does Lymph Drainage Therapy prove most useful?

The benefits of LDT include deep cleansing and detoxification

and its costs are paid for by European medical insurance. Lymph drainage offers practitioners a precise technique that can be used for numerous indications. The technique I developed, called Lymph Drainage Therapy, integrates technical knowledge of the anatomy and physiology of the lymph system with skills of deep listening to access the lymph rhythm in the patient. The hands-on method employs a very light touch that is not tiring or straining to the wrists and hands of the practitioner.

Practicing LDT in this way encourages greater sensitivity,

which leads to a higher degree of effectiveness. I teach a 10-point technique that explains how to determine the best hand pressure and direction, how to use the soft parts of the



In preparation for drainage of the face, Bruno Chikly, MD, works on the main nodes before the vessels



Bruno Chikly, MD

the Medical Faculty of Paris, VI, a prestigious acknowledgment for in-depth work and scientific presentation. Chikly is a member of the International Society of Lymphology as well.

of the body, regeneration of tissues (for example burns and scars), as well as stimulation of fluid circulation to improve edema of many types. LDT improves gen-

Photographs courtesy of The Updeger Institute

eral health by stimulating the immune system as a preventive measure or for health maintenance. It also can provide relief of chronic conditions such as sinusitis and allergies. Patients experience deep relaxation with this technique that can be helpful in cases of insomnia, stress and loss of vitality.

LDT provides antispastic action to improve constipation and muscle hypertonus. It also stimulates the parasympathetic nervous system and produces analgesic actions to relieve headaches.

With LDT, the practitioner can access and affect three major components of the body; the fluid circulation, the immune and the autonomic nervous systems, which can deliver profound results. There are no side effects of this method when the therapist respects the usual contraindications and precautions.

Everyone can benefit from LDT as a preventive or therapeutic approach, from the very young to those advanced in age. We all need deep cleansing of our toxins, stimulation of our immune system, and regulation of our autonomic nervous system.

### How does LDT differ from traditional manual lymph drainage techniques?

This technique is based on the latest discoveries in lymphology, precise anatomy and physiology. Before we begin lymph drainage, we can use complementary techniques like the "defibrillation anti-cellulite technique," which prepares the tissue for better fluid circulation. We also may add advanced methods like the neurogenic reflex techniques that stimulate the nerve receptors of the skin.

One of the biggest differences is the kinesthetic feedback the practitioners can get from using flat hands. Tuning-in to the lymph flow through the subcutaneous compartments of the body, one can follow the lymph rhythm and activate it. This profound feedback adds another dimension to lymph drainage that previously was overlooked, enabling the practitioner to

be precise in regard to the amount of pressure, speed and direction of the hands. This technique is a vehicle to explore the more subtle energies of the body, opening both the practitioner and patient up to a vast array of experiences.

### What educational background is required for studying LDT?

Cognizant of the fact that the anatomy, physiology and pathology of the lymphatic system are not generally known, the LDT coursework has been designed as a comprehensive system that takes a clear and scholarly approach. Our teaching method builds understanding and skills step-by-step, enabling most any therapist to comprehend the fundamentals of the technique. We slowly give students all the knowledge they need to be able to practice safely and efficiently right after the first course. In fact, we want them to practice right away and integrate LDT into their clinical setting.

Today, the critical function of the lymphatic system is acknowledged as key to maximizing our ability to restore and maintain optimal health. Lymph Drainage Therapy complements other manual techniques but it also has several unique indications for the health and well-being of the patient.

— Sharon Weiselfish, PhD, PT, is co-partner of Regional Physical Therapy and director of DCR: Dialogues in Contemporary Rehabilitation, both in Connecticut. She has extensive training and teaching experience in all areas of manual therapy. For more information on Lymph Drainage Therapy, call the International Alliance of Healthcare Educators at (800) 311-9204, ext. 9265.

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### Orlando, FL

**Spring Meeting**  
 April 11-14, 1996

The Florida Physical Therapy Association's spring meeting will be held at the Omni Rosen Hotel in Orlando from April 11 to 14. Contact Ashley Sniffen at (904) 222-1243, ext. 23 for more information.

### Gatlinburg, TN

**Joint Spring Meeting**  
 April 12-14, 1996

The Georgia and Tennessee chapters of the American Physical Therapy Association will hold their joint spring meeting at the Gatlinburg Convention Center from April 12 to 14. Contact Rose Marsden at (404) 982-0776 or Pat Autry at (615) 754-9013 for more information.

### Norfolk, VA

**Annual Conference**  
 April 12-14, 1996

The Virginia chapter of the American Physical Therapy Association will hold its annual conference from April 12 to 14 in Norfolk. For more information, contact Debbie Kelly at (800) 999-2782.

### Greenville, NC

**Spring Meeting**  
 April 16-19, 1996

The North Carolina chapter of the American Physical Therapy Association will hold its spring meeting at the Greenville Hilton from April 16 to 19. Contact Kelly Yelvington at (919) 772-6850 for more information.

### Columbus, OH

**Annual Conference**  
 April 17-20, 1996

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