

# Soft touch

SUE GASSICK AND LESLEY SALT PROVIDE SOME SELF-HELP EMMETT TECHNIQUES FOR THERAPISTS EXPERIENCING NECK TENSION

**W**e therapists are busy people, often juggling our time and efforts between our therapy work and family lives. The weight of that stress can often lead to neck and shoulder tension and we are usually the last ones to receive therapy ourselves. So, we'd like to show you how to quickly improve your neck tension and flexibility using the EMMETT Technique.

Referred to as the chameleon approach, due to its adaptability to a client's individual needs, the EMMETT Technique is a gentle way to release muscle tension and improve discomfort and movement restrictions using only light finger pressure. Developed over 30 years ago by Australian remedial massage therapist Ross Emmett, this non-invasive technique is effective in gaining access to important deeper muscles, and can easily be combined with massage and other therapies.

In this article, we will take you through the steps required to release the discomfort and stiffness in your own neck. We like to refer to the middle finger as the Emmett finger, as that is the easiest finger for most people to perform this work with. You may follow these instructions while sitting or standing. Note, it may not be as effective if you are lying down. When following the instructions to move your finger, pretend your finger pad is stuck to your skin, so your

finger only moves as far as the skin will comfortably stretch – usually about 1cm when under the collar bone, and usually less when on the mastoid bone behind the ear (about 1mm).

Work on the most restricted side, which is the side you have most difficulty turning towards.

This example is for restriction turning to the right.

## LOWER MOVES

Using your left hand, place the flat pad of your middle finger immediately below your right collarbone, just to the side of your breastbone.

**1** Keeping contact, move your finger in towards the centre line of the body with light pressure. Immediately lift your finger off.

**2** Staying directly underneath the right collarbone, relocate your finger 1cm further out from position 1 and repeat the inwards movement towards the centre line. Immediately lift your finger off again.

**3** Staying directly underneath the right collarbone, relocate your finger 1cm further out from position 2 and repeat the inwards movement towards the centre line. Immediately lift your finger off.

## UPPER MOVES

Using your left hand, place the flat pad of your middle finger immediately under the bone, directly behind your right ear.

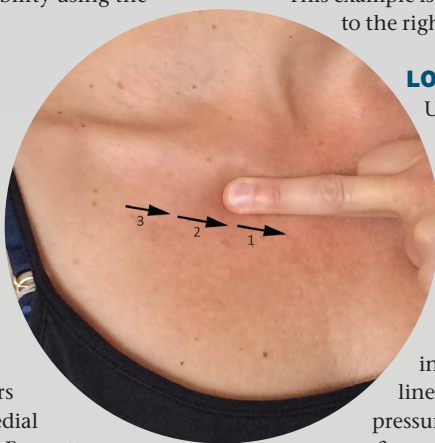
**4** Keeping contact, move your finger towards your chin with light pressure. This is a very small movement. Immediately lift your finger off.

**5** Staying directly underneath the bone, relocate your finger 1mm back from position 4 and repeat the small movement towards the chin. Immediately lift your finger off.

**6** Staying directly underneath the bone, relocate your finger 1mm back from position 5 and repeat the small movement towards the chin. Immediately lift your finger off.

Repeat moves 1 to 6 twice more.

Reassess your neck rotation. If necessary, repeat on the most restricted side now. If both sides feel and move evenly, you have finished. **IT**



**Sue Gassick and Lesley Salt** are the Directors and Senior Instructors for EMMETT Therapies UK. Trained by Ross Emmett in 2007, they offer workshops around the UK and Ireland, and are responsible for training other EMMETT instructors and tutors. For more information, visit [emmett-uk.com](http://emmett-uk.com) or email [info@emmett-uk.com](mailto:info@emmett-uk.com)