

Potential cure for unsightly eye bags

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Researchers from Flinders University have set their sights on lymphatic drainage as a potential cure for unsightly eye bags.

Professor Neil Piller from the University-funded Lymphoedema Research Unit is about to begin a study to explore the role of lymphatic drainage as a treatment for eye bags and puffiness, a perennial cosmetic problem that tends to worsen with age.

[Genes](#), fluid retention, diet and [sleep disturbances](#) are all known causes of eye bags, yet there is no scientifically proven therapy to treat the condition.

Professor Piller said the Lymphoedema Research Unit, based at Flinders Medical Centre, is now conducting a study to determine whether manual lymphatic drainage can diminish the appearance of eye bags, dark circles and puffiness by removing excess fluid and color-changing [pigments](#).

Manual lymph drainage is a gentle, non-invasive technique that is widely used by beauticians, spa therapists and [aroma](#) therapists to enhance fluid movement in the skin, although its therapeutic role in under-eye problems has been relatively under-researched.

“Eye bags are a cosmetic issue rather than a life-threatening condition, but they can be quite problematic for people who have them because they’re often very prominent on the face,” Professor Piller said.

“So we’ll be measuring the effect of manual lymphatic drainage on the severity, colour and [appearance](#) of the under-eye area and hopefully the research will lead to a therapy to treat this condition.”

Professor Piller said a total of 80 women, aged between 25 and 60, were needed for the study, including some without eye bags or dark circles to provide a comparison.

Participants with eye bags will be allocated to one of three groups, he said, and will receive one of the following treatments: a specialized facial massage five days a week for four weeks, a self-treatment device to use at home, or a package of commercial skincare products for the month-long trial.

“At regular intervals throughout the treatment we will use non-invasive equipment and 3D images to measure the area under the eyes to detect any changes in fluid accumulation or blood flow, as well as any colour or temperature changes to the skin,” Professor Piller said.

Provided by Flinders University

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