Kick-start your lymph and end fluid retention and heavy legs with a new massage treatment that offers the added benefit of reducing cellulite.

Anyone who has taken a long-haul flight is likely to have experienced the discomfort of heavy legs – that aching, tight, sometimes itchy feeling when your legs swell because of fluid retention. It’s not only frequent fliers who are affected; if you have been on a long car journey, have had to stay in bed while you’re ill or after an operation, or have simply been on your feet all day, you could suffer from heavy legs.

Fluid retention is caused by a sluggish lymphatic system – lymph fluid works side-by-side with your bloodstream to carry nutrients, white blood cells and waste products around the body. Unlike the blood, which is pumped by the heart, the lymph system is kept slowly moving by muscle contraction and arterial pulsation, so, if you remain immobile for too long, there can be a build-up of lymph fluid in the tissues of the body.

For many people, fluid retention problems will disappear as soon as they become active again, but for others, the lymphatic flow can be seriously restricted. And it’s these sufferers who may benefit from The Ballancer, a new high-powered pressure massage treatment.

The treatment for heavy legs involves lying in what’s best described as air-filled trousers that cover the lower body from the toes to just below the diaphragm. The air is alternately compressed and released by a pump, effectively acting as a kind of “external heart” and giving a clever, clinically designed flush-out massage for the feet, ankles, legs and abdomen. The method has its origins in the medical world, where it was developed to help ease lymphoedema, the build-up of lymphatic fluid in hospital patients as a result of trauma, post-surgical immobility, cancer treatments including radiotherapy for breast cancer, and serious infections.

The pressure from the massage comes from 24 overlapping air cells, and the settings can be adjusted to vary the intensity and deliver a number of intricate massage cycles and routines along your legs and lower torso.

For heavy legs sufferers there are a number of added benefits. “The Ballancer not only tackles the problem of fluid retention quickly and effectively, but has also been found to reduce cellulite and give inch loss,” explains Gemma Wilkins, who brought the treatment to the UK.

That is why The Ballancer has FDA approval in the US for the treatment of cellulite, as well as firming, toning and smoothing the skin, and encouraging the removal of toxins through lymphatic drainage.

If fluid retention is a problem for you in the arms and chest, there are compression jackets available for the upper body, too. And the best news is that the treatment is completely painless. After putting on a pair of protective paper leggings you simply step into the compression garment, then lie back and let the machine do all the work, emerging 60 minutes later feeling relaxed, firmer and free of any discomfort.

If you are a nagged slimmer, according to a survey of 2,000 men and women by LighterLife, one in five British men are made to lose weight by the women in their lives, while only half of many women have slimmed down under pressure from their spouses. Not surprisingly, 64 per cent of women said they dieted for their own self-esteem, yet only 42 per cent of men gave that as a reason.

Highland Rescue Gummy Stars, £6.95 – orange-flavoured chewable sweets based on the famous Bach Rescue Remedy – can ease anxiety for kids and parents alike.

Lighten up: lymph drainage will help eliminate the aches and pains of heavy legs, and improve your general health.

Advanced skin rescue HealGel, £37.50, the brainchild of five leading cosmetic surgeons, now has two sister products: Face, £48, and Eyes, £28. Tweaked to soothe, repair and rejuvenate more delicate skin, they’re available from Liberty and victoriahealth.com.

School daze The summer holidays are almost over, and if your child is a little apprehensive about going back to school, Bach Rescue Gummy Stars, £6.95 – orange-flavored chewable sweets based on the famous Bach Rescue Remedy – can ease anxiety for kids and parents alike.