

MANAGING YOUR LYMPHEDEMA:

- Follow the therapy plan formulated by your clinical team to maintain and prevent Lymphedema flare ups.
- Stay attuned to your body and alert for any changes so your clinical team can help you respond accordingly.
- Maintain your compression garments, replacing them every 6 months or as needed to ensure correct therapy is being delivered.
- Be sure to wear compression while traveling and avoid sitting or standing for long periods of time. Movement is important to maintain proper lymphatic flow.



Products available for treatment of Lymphedema include:

mediven® elastic compression

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Now that you have been diagnosed with Lymphedema, what happens next?



WHAT IS LYMPHEDEMA?

Lymphedema is a chronic disorder that affects women more often than men. When the lymphatic system is disturbed and the lymph fluid can no longer flow back properly, it accumulates in the tissues and causes something similar to a traffic jam. This usually results in a skin-colored swelling, called lymphedema.

Hereditary disorders of the lymphatic system are called primary lymphedema. However, most of the symptoms occur as the result of an operation, radiation, infections, or injuries. This disorder is classified as secondary lymphedema.



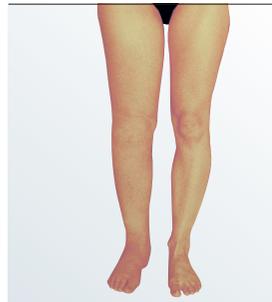
STAGES OF LYMPHEDEMA



Stage 0 –
The lymphatic vessels are already damaged, but there is not yet any visible swelling. This is often referred to as sub-clinical lymphedema.



Stage 1 –
The swelling is only seen in the evening and it disappears when the affected arm or leg is elevated. Symptoms become visible in this stage and a heavy sensation in the limb or fatigue can be felt by many patients.



Stage 2 –
The edema can start hardening and no longer recedes with rest or elevation. Initial skin changes can take place including hardening where indentations no longer happen when pressed.



Stage 3 –
Swelling reaches extreme proportions and limb is misshapen. The skin has hardened and lymphatic fluid can leak from wart-like growths, small blisters or fistulas if they develop. Risk for skin infections and deep/poorly healing wounds increases.

TREATMENT FOR LYMPHEDEMA

In conjunction with a healthy diet, optimal therapy can be achieved with 4 easy steps:

1. Hygiene and skin care:

Therapy starts with meticulous skin care to prevent any cracks, splits or cuts from becoming infected and creating complications in lymphedema management. Meticulous skin care is important!

2. Manual Lymph Drainage:

Using various massage techniques over the course of treatments, a trained therapist can improve the flow capacity of the lymphatic system. This allows the lymph system to aid in the decongestion process and reverse signs and symptoms of Lymphedema.

3. Compression Therapy:

Initial treatment with compression can help with the decongestion process and managing the limb volume down to a manageable size. Ongoing use of compression can allow a patient to maintain limb size and prevent the back flow of the lymphatic fluid. The correct type and fit of the compression garments are critical to support compliance and maintenance.

4. Exercise and Movement:

Mobility exercises are important while wearing compression garments. The resistance of the fabric against the natural muscle flexing process can help manage lymph flow and optimize the use of compression garments. Exercise should always be under the supervision of the doctor or therapist and done in a deliberate and controlled manner.

