

— SQUEEZE extra pairs IN —

Do you have enough pairs of of Activa®, ActiLymph®, Adore® or ReadyWrap®?

Did you know you can purchase extra pairs at www.lrsselfcare.co.uk or contact our friendly Customer Services team on **08450 606 707**

Would you like **10% off your first order?**

Join **Squeeze In** today which gives you easy access to support with looking after your legs plus:

- **10% off** your first order of extra pairs;
- **FREE** healthy living booklet;
- **Access** to the compression reminder service.

Scan the QR code to register for squeezein.life ▶



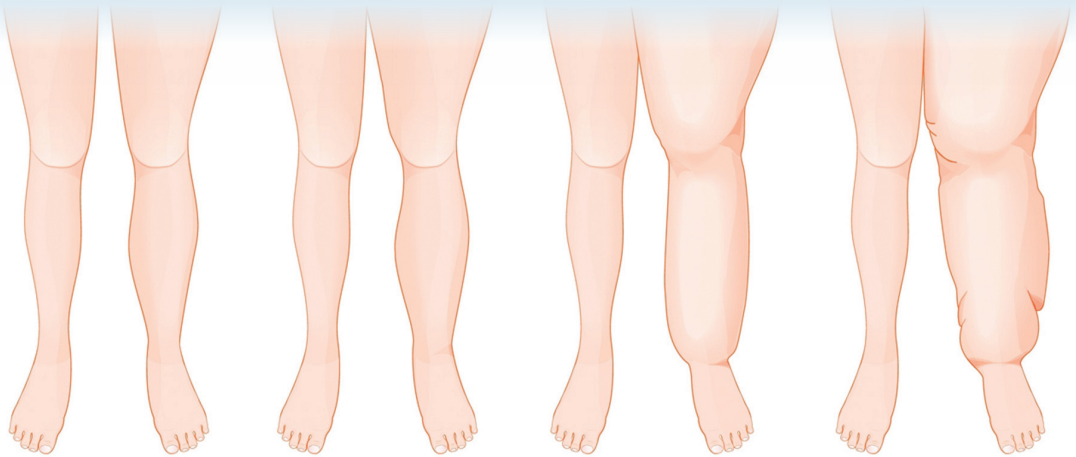
LEADING THE
SELF-CARE REVOLUTION



People.Health.Care.

Lymphoedema: its causes and how to manage it

Lymphoedema is a lifelong condition that can cause swelling in the affected area of the body, commonly the arms and legs. It can't be cured but fortunately, it can be managed. Here, we explain what causes lymphoedema and how to live well with the condition.



Lymphoedema describes a build-up of fluid in the tissues of the body resulting in swelling. Signs and symptoms of lymphoedema include a feeling of heaviness or tightness, aching or discomfort, and skin changes (Lymph Connect, 2022). It can affect any part of the body but is seen most commonly in the legs and arms.

What causes lymphoedema?

Before you can understand the causes of lymphoedema, you need to be aware of what the lymphatic system does and what lymph fluid is. The lymphatic system runs alongside the veins (venous system). It helps your body fight infection and is part of the immune system. It is made up of vessels and glands (clusters of nodes

found in the neck, armpits and groins), that take excess tissue fluid (known as lymph), from the tissues and carry it back into the blood (LSN, 2022). If there is a problem with the lymphatics, a build up of lymph can occur, resulting in lymphoedema.

There are two types of lymphoedema — primary and secondary. Primary lymphoedema is something you are born with. Secondary lymphoedema occurs when the lymphatic system is damaged in some way.

work properly. It can sometimes run in families, but not always.

Secondary lymphoedema occurs in people who previously had a normal lymphatic system but it has somehow become damaged. The

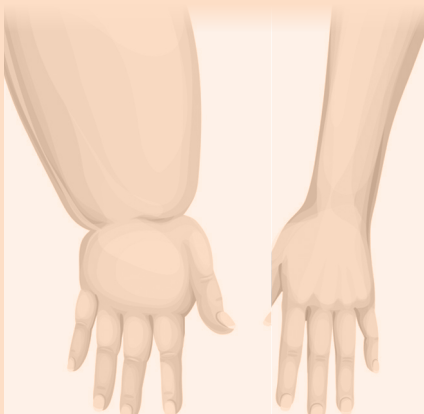
Primary and secondary lymphoedema

There are two types of lymphoedema – primary and secondary. Primary lymphoedema is present from birth and due to a fault, the lymphatics do not

most common causes for damage are cancer (see below), radiotherapy, infection, medical conditions resulting in inflammation (e.g. rheumatoid arthritis), obesity, trauma and injury, immobility and venous disease.

Lymphoedema of the upper limbs

Secondary lymphoedema of the arm, hand and breast/chest area can occur after treatment for breast cancer.



It is thought to affect around one in five women (NHS UK, 2019). Investigations or treatments for breast cancer such as surgery may result in one or more lymph nodes being removed, meaning that the lymph fluid has fewer drainage routes than before. This increases the risk of getting lymphoedema.

Arm lymphoedema responds well to compression therapy meaning symptoms can be controlled. This involves wearing a compression sleeve and depending on the area of swelling, the garment may need to cover your hand and fingers too. In combination with good skin care, movement and exercise, compression can help to minimise any swelling.



In the lower limb, problems with the veins and the lymphatic system often occur together. As the veins in the legs have to push blood up against gravity, the small valves often become damaged and blood can leak backwards. This results in an increase in pressure and fluid leaking out into the tissues. This extra fluid overwhelms the lymphatic system, leading to a collection of fluid in the tissues of the leg.

How is it treated?

There's no cure for lymphoedema, but it is usually possible to control the main symptoms.

The key components of lymphoedema management are skin care, exercise, and wearing compression. Combined, these three components of care help to improve and maintain skin health and drive fluid from the tissues where it causes swelling back into the circulation. Doing this can prevent the development of complications, such as extreme swelling and infection.

Key to the success of the management is developing a plan of care with your healthcare professional that is suited to you personally, that is appropriate for your condition and that you can maintain and are happy with in the long term.

Where can I get help?

If you are worried or have any questions during your treatment, talk to your healthcare professional about your concerns.

Talking to other people with lymphoedema can be reassuring and decrease feelings of isolation, stress and anxiety. There are also organisations that can help. The Lymphoedema Support Network is a national charity that provides information and support for people with lymphoedema (see p.32–33 for more details), while LymphConnect also offers resources and support (p.36).

References

Lymph Connect (2022) What is lymphoedema? www.lymphconnect.co.uk/what-is-lymphoedema/
NHS UK (2019) Lymphoedema. www.nhs.uk/conditions/lymphoedema/
LSN (2022) What is lymphoedema? www.lymphoedema.org/information/what-is-lymphoedema/

Tips to take care of your limbs

Sleep in bed — to encourage movement of fluid from your tissues and back into the circulation

Wear compression — to support your veins and lymph vessels in clearing fluid from your tissues

Mobilise/exercise — movement of muscles in your affected limb can help to mobilise fluid

Modify lifestyle factors — Improve what you can to help your overall wellbeing, such as improve your diet, give up smoking, reduce the amount you drinking. Any positive change will help.



Free
Delivery to any
UK address



Prompt and hassle-free delivery of your
JOBST® prescription garments to your home

JOBST Delivered offers dispensing of JOBST compression garments by post to your home or any other UK address - free of charge!



For more information, speak to
your healthcare professional or
visit www.jobst.co.uk

JOBST Delivered is operated by Daylong Direct, 10 Cossall Industrial Estate, Ilkeston, Derby, DE7 5UG. As an NHS contractor, Daylong Direct is compliant with all relevant data protection regulations including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018 and the Confi dentiality: NHS Code of Practice and are committed to protecting and securing your data. To view their Privacy Policy visit www.daylong.co.uk.



Essity
T/A BSN medical Limited
PO Box 258 • Willerby • Hull • HU10 6WT
www.jobst.co.uk
Tel: 01482 670100 • Fax: 01482 670111