

What causes lymphedema?

There are two general types of lymphedema:

Primary Lymphedema usually appears without obvious cause or after a minor trauma or an infection. It can happen at any age, but is due to a congenital abnormality. This condition may be hereditary.

Secondary Lymphedema is an acquired condition resulting from the loss of previously normal lymph pathways. It often occurs after a surgical procedure where lymph nodes or lymph vessels have been removed or damaged. Surgery and/or radiation for cancer treatment is one of the most common causes. People who have had treatment for breast cancer, melanomas, prostate cancer, ovarian, cervical, or lymphomas are all at risk, although the swelling may not appear until months or even years later.

Harris Regional Outpatient Lymphedema Treatment Program

Helping you relieve swelling in 4 simple steps:

1. Evaluation by a Certified Lymphedema Therapist
2. Therapist will educate you and your family about your condition and will recommend a course of treatment for you in consultation with your doctor.
3. Therapy will be scheduled based on your goals and individual circumstances.
4. Completion of therapy with guidance for self management and necessary compression garments for maintenance.

Upon completion of Lymphedema therapy the following may be dispensed:

- Compression Stockings and/or Garment
- Vasopneumatic Compression Pump

Contact us

For more information on Lymphedema Therapy or any other rehab service please call or email:

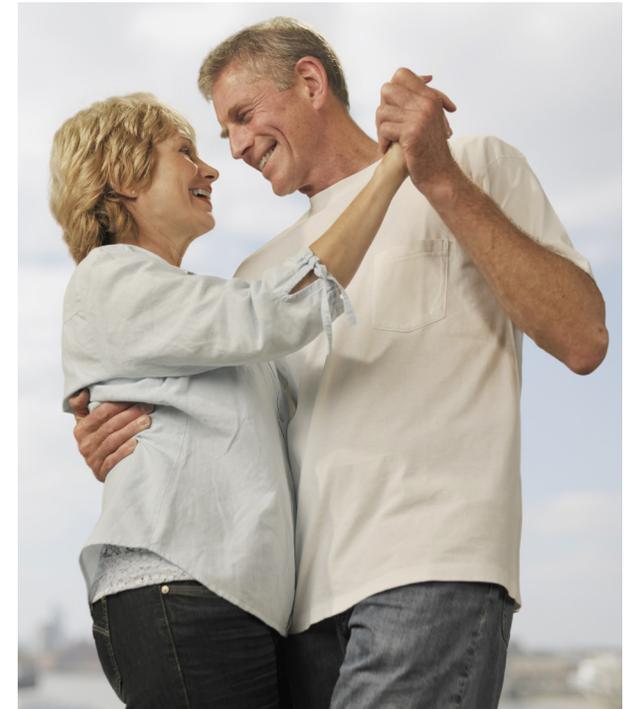
828.586.7235

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Lymphedema Therapy @

HARRIS
REGIONAL HOSPITAL



**Outpatient
Rehabilitation
Services**

What is lymphedema?

Lymphedema is the swelling of a human body part caused by an abnormal accumulation of fluid, proteins, and cellular waste in the tissues under the skin. It occurs when there is a problem in the lymphatic system:

- The failure of lymph vessels to develop properly
- Damage to lymph vessels by trauma, surgery, or infection
- Removal or destruction of lymph nodes, usually during treatment of cancer
- Multiple episodes of infection and cellulitis.
- Chronic venous insufficiency resulting in changes of skin texture.

Lymphedema can be a painful and disfiguring condition. Even when the degree of lymphedema is relatively mild, it can make wearing regular clothes more difficult, limit activities, and increase the risk for infections.

Treatment for lymphedema

Lymphedema is not curable, but it is controllable. Treatment can be very effective and greatly improve quality of life, even for people who have had lymphedema for many years.

The best and most effective treatment for lymphedema is Complete Decongestive Therapy (CDT) which has four major components:

1. Manual lymphatic drainage (MLD) is a gentle massage-like technique. It helps to move the excess fluid to areas where the lymph system is functioning.
2. Compression bandaging and garments, is an essential component of lymphedema management. Keeping the limb wrapped in a multi-layer low-stretch bandage during treatment can decrease the excess fluid and help to soften the tissues. After treatment, a gradient compression stocking or sleeve can help maintain results.
3. Exercise prescribed by your therapist to be performed while wearing appropriate compression.
4. Meticulous skin and nail care is critical to the affected limb to prevent skin cracking. Using low pH soaps and lotions can help protect against bacterial infections which can lead to cellulitis.

Lymphedema Evaluation Referral

Occupational Therapy - Arm(s)/neck

Physical Therapy - Leg(s)

Date: _____

Patient Name: _____

Patient Phone: _____

Diagnosis

Lymphedema, chronic

Scarring of the Lymph Channels - cellulitis, lymphangitis

Tumor(s) Obstructing Lymph flow

Cancer

Chronic venous insufficiency with/without ulcers

Other: _____

Physician Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Phone: _____

Fax: _____

Additional comments:

