

What is lymphedema?

Lymphedema is an abnormal accumulation of protein rich fluid in a body part, such as an arm or leg on one side of the body. It causes swelling in the arm, or leg. The swelling may also be seen in nearby tissue, such as breast tissue.

Who is at risk?

Anyone who has sustained damage to his/her lymphatic system, either through radiation, lymph node removal, or trauma. In the United States, lymphedema is most commonly seen in the upper extremity of women who have undergone breast cancer treatment such as: radiation, lymph node removal or dissection.

What is lymphedema therapy?

Complete decongestive therapy, which consists of manual lymph drainage (MLD). It is a special type of massage utilized to move the lymphedema out of the swollen limb to areas where the lymphatic vessels are functioning normally. After successful MLD, the therapist will wrap the limb in several layers of short stretch bandages in order to prevent the limb from re-filling with lymphedema.

What do treatment sessions consists of?

You will spend 45 minutes to 1 hour with a lymphedema therapist: 30 minutes for massage and 30 minutes to wrap the limb in the compression bandages. Patients can expect to attend the lymphedema therapy 3 times per week for 4 weeks.

What is a lymphedema therapist?

It is an individual who has completed a 140 hour course in lymphedema therapy. This can be a physical therapist or an occupational therapist.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, please contact us at:

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