

## What is Lymphedema?

When the lymphatic system is faulty or has been damaged, fluid may collect in the tissues and this build up can cause swelling or other effects that could be the early signs of lymphedema.

### What is the function of our Lymphatic System?

Lymph is a colourless fluid which forms in the body and normally drains back into the blood circulation through a network of lymph vessels and lymph nodes. The lymphatic system plays an important part in the body's defense against infection.

### Types of Lymphedema:

**Primary lymphedema** develops as a result of a malfunctioning lymphatic system, usually as a result of genetic underdevelopment.

**Secondary lymphedema** is the result of damage to lymphatic pathways. This may be a result of treatment for cancer following surgery or radiation therapy.

## Lymphedema and Cellulitis

Patients with Lymphedema are at increased risk of acute cellulitis/ erysipelas. **Good skin care** reduces the likelihood of cellulitis/ erysipelas and consequently need for antibiotics.

\*\* Lymphedema patients receiving home care services are usually diagnosed with cellulitis needing course of antibiotic therapy to treat infection.

Once finished with course of antibiotics, patients on service that have no wound (including weeping) with no other identified needs should be discharged from service.

### Best Practice Management – Holistic approach

- Exercise
- Proper skin hygiene
- Limb elevation
- Compression and or massage

Source: Lymphoedema Framework. *Best Practice for the Management of Lymphoedema*. International consensus. London: MEP Ltd, 2006.

## Compression Garments

The main use of compression garments in the long- term management of Lymphedema, usually following a period of intensive therapy. Compression garments are also used for prophylaxis or as part of the initial treatment.

Intensive therapy includes the combination of skin care, exercise, Manual Lymphatic Drainage (MLD) and Multi-Layer Inelastic Lymphedema Bandaging (MLLB) is often known as decongestive lymphatic therapy (DLT) or complete decongestive therapy (CDT).

## Certified Lymphedema Specialists

Disclaimer: For therapists outside MH CCAC, please refer to <http://www.lymphontario.ca/directory>. MHCCAC does not endorse any particular provider. The contact information provided is for informational purposes and provides opportunity for further research by the patient, family and members of the community. Contact providers directly for any related product and fees.

<b>Therapist Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Services</b>
Alison Glasbey RPT 416 – 251- 2300	Etobicoke Wheel chair accessible clinic	
Anastacia Efimkina RMT OsteoMed Clinic 416-255-3663  <a href="http://www.osteomedclinic.com">www.osteomedclinic.com</a>	Etobicoke Wheel chair accessible clinic	
Violetta Soffe RMT 416- 727- 0020 <a href="mailto:violettasoffe@hotmail.com">violettasoffe@hotmail.com</a>	Etobicoke	Mobile Therapy
Kathleen Rossini RPT In Focus Rehabilitation Centre 905-702-7891	Georgetown Wheelchair Accessible Clinic	ADP Registered Authorizer
Rae Baron RMT NcTMB 905-878-9041 <a href="http://www.raebaronrmt.ca">www.raebaronrmt.ca</a>	Milton	ADP Registered Authorizer Mobile Therapy
Michelle Schober MPT CLT  LifeMark 905-858- 3273 <a href="mailto:Michelle.schober@lifemark.ca">Michelle.schober@lifemark.ca</a>	Mississauga Wheelchair Accessible Clinic	
Nancy Scagnetti RN RMT LLC  905- 607- 8422/ 647-718-3780 <a href="http://www.lymphedemawellnesscentre.com">www.lymphedemawellnesscentre.com</a>	Mississauga Caledon Wheelchair Accessible Clinic	ADP Registered Fitter Mobile Therapy ALT – Aqua Lymph Therapy
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