

Lymphedema

Lymphedema refers to swelling that generally occurs in one of your arms or legs. Sometimes both arms and both legs swell.

Lymphedema is most commonly caused by the removal of or damage to your lymph nodes as a part of cancer treatment or due to venous insufficiency. It results from a blockage in your lymphatic system, which is part of your immune system. The blockage prevents lymph fluid from draining well, and the fluid buildup leads to swelling.

There's no cure for lymphedema. But it can be managed with early diagnosis and diligent care of your affected limb.

Treatments for Lymphedema

- First line of treatment is always therapy in which a special massage technique called manual lymph drainage may encourage the flow of lymph fluid out of your arm or leg. Be sure to have it done by someone specially trained in the technique. This usually comes in conjunction with:
- **Wrapping your arm or leg.** Bandaging your entire limb encourages lymph fluid to flow back toward the trunk of your body. The bandage should be tightest around your fingers or toes and loosen as it moves up your arm or leg. A lymphedema therapist can show you how to wrap your limb. Azer Medical Supply carries all supplies in stock needed by the therapist to wrap your limb.
- **Compression garments.** Long sleeves or stockings made to compress your arm or leg and encourage the flow of the lymph fluid out of your affected limb. Most people wear compression garments during the day and remove at night. Although there are night sleeves and compression garments that can be worn at night.

You have to obtain a correct fit for your compression garment by getting professional help. Here at Azer medical supply we have a certified fitter for off-the-shelf garments and some people may require custom fit garments which our certified fitter has over 30 years experience in measuring and fitting. Call us today for more details regarding insurance coverage or to schedule an appointment for your fitting.

- **Pneumatic compression.** Azer Medical Supply is the only medical supply company in Galesburg to provide and bill insurance for Pneumatic compression therapy. The goal of using a pump in the treatment of lymphedema is to move excess fluid out of

the affected limb and return it to the cardiovascular system. A pump is prescribed by the physician to be used by our customers at home once a patient who has been trained in its proper use by our staff.

Since the pump is used at home it is necessary that the patient purchase this piece of equipment.

A pump is a major expense; however most insurance plans, including Medicare, will approve the purchase of a pump as Durable Medical Equipment (DME) with little or no cost to you. The first step for this process is to obtain a written prescription from your physician for this equipment and our staff at Azer Medical Supply will be happy to assist you with this process.