

10 Things LE



My Certified Lymphedema Therapist Taught Me About Lymphedema

- 1. Self-management.** I can learn to manage my Lymphedema (LE) with the guidance of my Certified Lymphedema Therapist (CLT). I can do manual lymph drainage (MLD), use a pneumatic compression device (pump), wrap the affected limb, and put on garments.
- 2. Garments.** I can learn how to don and doff (put on and take off) compression garments and, while it is often difficult to adjust to wearing them, it will get easier over time and with practice.
- 3. Infection prevention.** I can reduce the risk of infections by using skin products with the appropriate pH (acidic <7.0), treating any cuts, scrapes, or scratches immediately, avoiding routine injections or blood pressure readings in the affected area, and seeking medical care as soon as symptoms of cellulitis (redness, fever, pain) appear.
- 4. Education.** I can educate myself about lymphedema, and also educate the physicians and other healthcare professionals I come into contact with. The CLT will teach me and can advocate for me if I need assistance.
- 5. Exercise and Activity.** I can exercise anywhere and often to keep the lymph flowing. I can stay active, taking care not to sit or stand still for long periods of time.
- 6. Hydration and Nutrition.** I can manage my diet by eating healthy foods, avoiding sugars and salt, if indicated, and drinking adequate amounts of water daily.
- 7. Adjusting Treatment Plans.** I can tweak my treatment program from time to time. I should see my CLT every 6 to 12 months to get advice about new ideas and review of my compression garments. My goal is to reach the point where I have the best control with the least effort, knowing that differs for each person with LE.
- 8. Elevation.** I can keep my feet elevated during the day as much as possible and overnight too by elevating the end of the bed, using a wedge, or placing pillows under my legs. If the LE is in my arm, I can sleep with my arm on a pillow.
- 9. Emotions and Attitude.** I know that LE is overwhelming at first but will get easier over time. I can get support from online groups of individuals with LE, from my CLT, friends and family, and mental health professionals to help me cope with this lifelong disease.
- 10. Ongoing Assistance.** I know if I ever have a question or concern, I can contact my CLT for advice. I also know if the CLT is not listening to or helping me, I have the right to find another CLT.



Lymphatic Education
& Research Network

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