

DO I NEED A REFERRAL?

A referral from a Doctor or other health professional is required as it provides us with relevant medical and medication information.

IS THERE A COST?

There is no charge for visits to the Lymphoedema Service, however the cost of equipment or materials such as compression garments and bandages is at the client's expense.

WHERE CAN I FIND OUT MORE?

Enquiries or referrals can be directed to:

Lymphoedema Service
Community Rehabilitation Centre (CRC) / Allied
Health Building
73 - 75 Vermont Street
Wodonga, VIC, 3690.
(PO Box 326, Albury, NSW, 2640)
Phone: (02) 6051 7400
Fax: (02) 6051 7430
www.awh.org.au



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This publication has been reviewed by the Consumer led ORCHID Committee and has the consumer endorsed tick of approval.



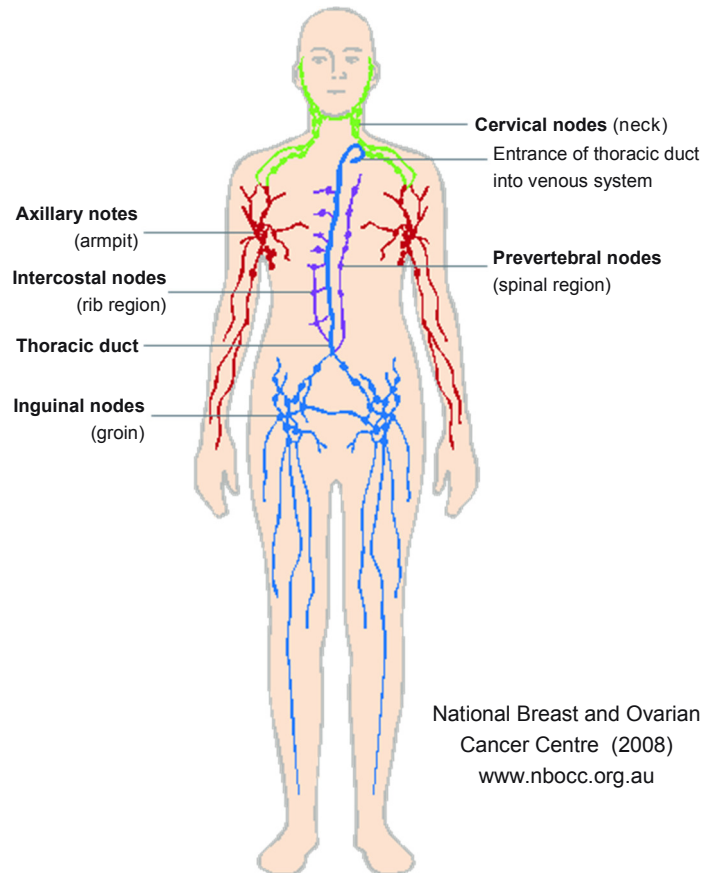
LYMPHOEDEMA SERVICE



WHAT IS LYMPHOEDEMA?

Lymphoedema is swelling that results from the build up of fluid in the body's tissues. It most commonly occurs in the arms and legs, but can also occur in the torso.

The lymph system consists of lymph fluid, lymph vessels and lymph nodes. It helps to drain fluid and waste materials from the tissues back into the circulatory system. There are lymph nodes all around the body including the armpit, neck, chest, abdomen and groin.



WHAT CAUSES LYMPHOEDEMA?

Lymphoedema can occur when lymph nodes or vessels are damaged or blocked (eg: from surgery, radiotherapy, obesity or chronic vein problems). It may also occur in people whose lymph system is poorly developed or not functioning properly.

Lymphoedema does not necessarily occur immediately after damage to the lymph system. It may develop months or years later.

Most people who have surgery and/or radiotherapy to the lymph nodes will NOT develop lymphoedema.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF LYMPHOEDEMA ?

Some early signs of lymphoedema in a limb or body part may include:

- Heaviness, tightness or swelling (you may notice that clothing or jewellery is becoming tight).
- Discomfort or pain.

If you experience these symptoms, or you believe that you may be at risk of developing lymphoedema, you are encouraged to talk to your Doctor about having an assessment by a Lymphoedema Therapist.

CAN LYMPHOEDEMA BE TREATED?

It is not possible to cure lymphoedema, however it can be managed and the risk of pain, poor mobility and infection can be reduced.

WHAT CAN THE LYMPHOEDEMA SERVICE OFFER YOU?

- Assessment by a Lymphoedema Therapist and an individual treatment plan.
- Lymphoedema risk minimisation strategies.
- Self management advice regarding skin care, self-massage and exercise.
- Prescription of compression therapy including bandaging, garments and compression pump if appropriate.
- The cost of bandages and garments is at the client's expense, however some financial assistance may be available for garments for Victorian clients through the **SWEP Lymphoedema Compression Garment Program**, or NSW clients through the **Enable Program**. We can provide you with more information about this if necessary.
- Access to multidisciplinary team care including: Physiotherapy, Allied Health Assistants, Dietetics and Social Work.